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THE MAYFLOWER;

OR,

Tales and Pencilings.

BY HARRIET. BEECHER.

"A welcome garland here is wreathed
Of the pleasant flowers of May;
Of lesson, song, and story, breathed,
And many a pleasant lay,
To tell when youthful friends are round,
And joy, and love, and mirth abound."

London:
THOMAS NELSON, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND EDINBURGH.

MDCCCXLIX.

PREFACE.

In the following pages the reader will find a series of pleasing and instructive sketches, characterized by the refinement and tenderness which mark with such peculiar attractions the best productions of feminine taste, and confer on them such admirable fitness for the family circle. They are from the pen of a gifted American authoress — Harriet Beecher; and, in introducing this volume to the English reader, the editor feels assured that that sprightliness and happy humour, and still more the fine taste and high moral principle displayed by the authoress, will secure for her a hearty welcome to many a fireside in the Homes of merry England.

London, *December*, 1848.

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FLORENCE L'ESTRANGE.. Page 7.

THE MAYFLOWER.

FLORENCE L'ESTRANGE; OR, THE ROSE TREE.

Rose! what dost thou here?
Bridal, royal rose?
How midst grief and fear,
Canst thou thus disclose
That fervid hue of love, which to thy heart-leaf glows.

HEMANS.

THERE it stood, in its little green vase, on a light ebony stand in the window of the drawing-room. The rich satin curtains, with their costly fringes, swept down on either side of it, and around it glittered every rare and fanciful trifle which wealth can offer to luxury, and yet that simple rose was the fairest of them all. So pure it looked, its white leaves just touched with that delicious creamy tint peculiar to its kind; its cup so full, so perfect; its head bending as if it were sinking and melting away in its own richness—oh! when did

ever man make anything to equal the living, perfect flower!

But the sunlight that streamed through the window revealed something fairer than the rose Reclined on an ottoman, in a deep recess, and intently engaged with a book, rested what seemed the counterpart of that so lovely flower. That cheek so pale, that fair forehead so spiritual, that countenance so full of high thought, those long, downcast lashes, and the expression of the beautiful mouth, sorrowful, yet subdued and sweet—it seemed like the picture of a dream.

"Florence! Florence!" echoed a merry and musical voice, in a sweet, impatient tone. Turn your head, reader, and you will see a light and sparkling maiden, the very model of some little wilful elf, born of mischief and motion, with a dancing eye, a foot that scarcely seems to touch the carpet, and a smile so multiplied by dimples that it seems like a thousand smiles at once. "Come, Florence, I say," said the little sprite, "put down that wise, good, and excellent volume, and descend from your cloud, and talk with a poor little mortal."

"I have been thinking what you are to do with

your pet rose when you go away, as, to our consternation, you are determined to do; you know it would be a sad pity to leave it with such a scatterbrain as I am. I do love flowers, that is a fact; that is, I like a regular bouquet, cut off and tied up, to carry to a party; but as to all this tending and fussing, which is needful to keep them growing, I have no gifts in that line."

"Make yourself easy as to that, Kate," said Florence, with a smile; "I have no intention of calling upon your talents: I have an asylum in view for my favourite."

"Oh, then you know just what I was going to say. Mrs. Marshall, I presume, has been speaking to you; she was here yesterday, and I was quite pathetic upon the subject, telling her the loss your favourite would sustain, and so forth; and she said how delighted she would be to have it in her greenhouse, it is in such a fine state now, so full of buds. I told her I knew you would like to give it to her, you are so fond of Mrs. Marshall, you know."

"Now, Kate, I am sorry, but I have otherwise engaged it."

"Who can it be to? you have so few intimates here."

"Oh, it is only one of my odd fancies."

"But do tell me, Florence."

"Well, cousin, you know the little pale girl to whom we give sewing."

"What! little Mary Stephens? How absurd! Florence, this is just another of your motherly, old-maidish ways—dressing dolls for poor children, making bonnets and knitting socks for all the little dirty babies in the region round about. I do believe you have made more calls in those two vile, ill-smelling alleys back of our house, than ever you have in Chesnut-street, though you know everybody is half dying to see you; and now, to crown all, you must give this choice little bijou to a sempstress-girl, when one of your most intimate friends, in your own class, would value it so highly. What in the world can people in their circumstances want of flowers?"

"Just the same as I do," replied Florence calmly. "Have you not noticed that the little girl never comes here without looking wistfully at the opening buds? And, don't you remember, the other morning she asked me so prettily if I would let her mother come and see it, she was so fond of flowers?"

"But, Florence, only think of this rare flower standing on a table with ham, eggs, cheese, and flour, and stifled in that close little room where Mrs. Stephens and her daughter manage to wash, iron, cook, and nobody knows what besides."

"Well, Kate, and if I were obliged to live in one coarse room, and wash, and iron, and cook, as you say—if I had to spend every moment of my time in toil, with no prospect from my window but a brick wall and dirty lane, such a flower as this would be untold enjoyment to me."

"Pshaw! Florence—all sentiment: poor people have no time to be sentimental. Besides, I don't believe it will grow with them; it is a greenhouse flower, and used to delicate living."

"Oh, as to that, a flower never inquires whether its owner is rich or poor; and Mrs. Stephens, whatever else she has not, has sunshine of as good quality as this that streams through our window. The beautiful things that God makes are his gift to all alike. You will see that my fair rose will be as well and cheerful in Mrs. Stephen's room as in ours."

"Well, after all, how odd! When one gives to poor people, one wants to give them something

useful—a bushel of potatoes, a ham, and such things."

"Why, certainly, potatoes and ham must be supplied; but, having ministered to the first and most craving wants, why not add any other little pleasures or gratifications we may have it in our power to bestow? I know there are many of the poor who have fine feeling and a keen sense of the beautiful, which rusts out and dies because they are too hard pressed to procure it any gratification. Poor Mrs. Stephens, for example: I know she would enjoy birds, and flowers, and music as much as I do. I have seen her eye light up as she looked on these things in our drawing-room, and yet not one beautiful thing can she command. From necessity, her room, her clothing, all she has must be coarse and plain. You should have seen the almost rapture she and Mary felt when I offered them my rose."

"Dear me! all this may be true, but I never thought of it before. I never thought that these hard-working people had any ideas of *taste!*"

"Then why do you see the geranium or rose so carefully nursed in the old cracked teapot in the poorest room, or the morning-glory planted in a

box and twined about the window. Do not these show that the human heart yearns for the beautiful in all ranks of life? You remember, Kate, how our washerwoman sat up a whole night, after a hard day's work, to make her first baby a pretty dress to be baptized in."

"Yes, and I remember how I laughed at you for making such a tasteful little cap for it."

"Well, Katy, I think the look of perfect delight with which the poor mother regarded her baby in its new dress and cap, was something quite worth creating: I do believe she could not have felt more grateful if I had sent her a barrel of flour."

"Well, I never thought before of giving any thing to the poor but what they really needed, and I have always been willing to do that when I could without going far out of my way."

"Well, cousin, if our heavenly Father gave to us after this mode, we should have only coarse, shapeless piles of provisions lying about the world instead of all this beautiful variety of trees, and fruits, and flowers."

"Well, well, cousin, I suppose you are right—but have mercy on my poor head; it is too small

to hold so many new ideas all at once—so go on your own way." And the little lady began practising a waltzing step before the glass with great satisfaction.

It was a very small room, lighted by only one window. There was no carpet on the floor; there was a clean, but coarsely-covered bed in one corner; a cupboard, with a few dishes and plates, in the other; a chest of drawers; and before the window stood a small cherry stand, quite new, and, indeed, it was the only article in the room that seemed so.

A pale, sickly-looking woman of about forty was leaning back in her rocking-chair, her eyes closed and her lips compressed as if in pain. She rocked backward and forward a few minutes, pressed her hand hard upon her eyes, and then languidly resumed her fine stitching, on which she had been busy since morning. The door opened, and a slender little girl of about twelve years of age entered, her large blue eyes dilated and radiant with delight as she bore in the vase with the rose-tree in it.

"Oh! see, mother, see! Here is one in full

bloom, and two more half out, and ever so many more pretty buds peeping out of the green leaves."

The poor woman's face brightened as she looked, first on the rose and then on her sickly child, on whose face she had not seen so bright a colour for months.

"God bless her!" she exclaimed, unconsciously.

"Miss Florence—yes, I knew you would feel so, mother. Does it not make your head feel better to see such a beautiful flower? Now you will not look so longingly at the flowers in the market, for we have a rose that is handsomer than any of them. Why, it seems to me it is worth as much to us as our whole little garden used to be. Only see how many buds there are! Just count them and only smell the flower! Now where shall we set it up?" And Mary skipped about, placing her flower first in one position and then in another and walking off to see the effect, till her mother gently reminded her that the rose-tree could not preserve its beauty without sunlight.

"Oh yes, truly," said Mary; "well, then, it must stand here on our new stand. How glad I am that we have such a handsome new stand for it; it will look so much better." And Mrs. Stephens

laid down her work, and folded a piece of newspaper, on which the treasure was duly deposited.

"There," said Mary, watching the arrangement eagerly, "that will do—no, for it does not show both the opening buds; a little farther round—a little more; there, that is right;" and then Mary walked around to view the rose in various positions, after which she urged her mother to go with her to the outside, and see how it looked there. "How kind it was in Miss Florence to think of giving this to us!" said Mary; "though she had done so much for us, and given us so many things, yet this seems the best of all, because it seems as if she thought of us, and knew just how we felt; and so few do that, you know, mother."

What a bright afternoon that little gift made in that little room. How much faster Mary's fingers flew the livelong day as she sat sewing by her mother; and Mrs. Stephens, in the happiness of her child, almost forgot that she had a headache, and thought, as she sipped her evening cup of tea, that she felt stronger than she had done for some time.

That rose! its sweet influence died not with the first day. Through all the long cold winter,

the watching, tending, cherishing that flower, awakened a thousand pleasant trains of thought that beguiled the sameness and weariness of their life. Every day the fair, growing thing put forth some fresh beauty—a leaf, a bud, a new shoot, and constantly awakened fresh enjoyment in its possessors. As it stood in the window, the passer-by would sometimes stop and gaze, attracted by its beauty, and then proud and happy was Mary; nor did even the serious and careworn widow notice with indifference this tribute to the beauty of their favourite.

But little did Florence think, when she bestowed the gift, that there twined about it an invisible thread that reached far and brightly into the web of her destiny.

One cold afternoon in early spring, a tall and graceful gentleman called at the lowly room to pay for the making of some linen by the inmates. He was a stranger and wayfarer, recommended through the charity of some of Mrs. Stephens's patrons. As he turned to go, his eye rested admiringly on the rose-tree, and he stopped to gaze at it.

"How beautiful!" said he.

"Yes," said little Mary, "and it was given to us by a lady as sweet and beautiful as that is."

"Ah," said the stranger, turning upon her a pair of bright dark eyes, pleased and rather struck by the communication; "and how came she to give it to you, my little girl?"

"Oh, because we are poor, and mother is sick, and we never can have anything pretty. We used to have a garden once, and we loved flowers so much, and Miss Florence found it out, and so she gave us this."

"Florence!" echoed the stranger.

"Yes—Miss Florence l'Estrange—a beautiful lady. They say she was from foreign parts; but she speaks English just like other ladies, only sweeter."

"Is she here now? Is she in this city?" said the gentleman, eagerly.

"No; she left some months ago," said the widow, noticing the shade of disappointment on his face; "but," said she, "you can find out all about her at her aunt's, No. 10 —— Street."

A short time after, Florence received a letter in a handwriting that made her tremble. During the many early years of her life spent in France

she had well learned to know that writing—had loved as a woman like her loves, only once—but there had been obstacles of parents and friends, long separation, long suspense, till, after anxious years, she had believed the ocean had closed over that hand and heart; and it was this that had touched with such pensive sorrow the lines in her lovely face.

But this letter told that he was living, that he had traced her, even as a hidden streamlet may be traced, by the freshness, the verdure of heart, which her deeds of kindness had left wherever she had passed. Thus much said, our readers need no help in finishing my story for themselves.

COUSIN WILLIAM.

Oh! not when hopes are brighest,
  Is all love's sweet enchantment known;
Oh! not when hearts are lightest,
  Is all fond woman's favour shown.

PRINGLE.

THE house in which the heroine of our story lived stood almost concealed amid a forest of apple-trees, in spring blushing with blossoms, and in autumn golden with fruit; and near by might be seen the garden, surrounded by a red picket-fence, enclosing all sorts of magnificence. There, in autumn, might be seen luxuriant vines, which seemed puzzled for room where to bestow themselves, and bright golden squashes, and full-orbed yellow pumpkins, looking as satisfied as the evening sun when he has just had his face washed in a shower, and is sinking soberly to bed. There were super-

annuated seed-cucumbers, enjoying the pleasures of a contemplative old age; and Indian corn, nicely done up in green silk, with a specimen tassel hanging at the end of each ear. The beams of the summer sun darted through rays of crimson currants, abounding on bushes by the fence, while a sulky black currant-bush sat scowling in one corner, a sort of garden curiosity.

The father of our heroine belonged to that necessary class of beings who, though remarkable for nothing at all, are very useful in filling up the links of society. Far otherwise was his sister-in-law, who, on the demise of his wife, had assumed the reins of government in the household.

This lady was of the same opinion that has animated many illustrious philosophers, namely, that the affairs of this world need a great deal of seeing to in order to have them go on prosperously; and, although she did not, like them, engage in the supervision of the universe, she made amends by unremitting diligence in the department under her care. In her mind there was an evident necessity that every one should be up and doing: Monday, because it was washing-day; Tuesday, because it was ironing-day; Wednesday, because

it was baking-day; Thursday, because to-morrow was Friday, and so on to the end of the week. Then she had the care of reminding all in the house of everything each was to do from week's end to week's end; and she was so faithful in this respect, that scarcely an original act of volition took place in the family. The poor deacon was reminded when he went out and when he came in, when he sat down and when he rose up, so that an act of omission could only have been committed through sheer malice prepense.

But the supervision of a whole family of children afforded, to a lady of her active turn of mind, more abundant matter of exertion. To see that their faces were washed, their clothes mended, and their catechism learned; to see that they did not pick the flowers, nor throw stones at the chickens, nor sophisticate the great house-dog, was an accumulation of care that devolved almost entirely on Mrs. Abigail, so that, by her own account, she lived and throve by a perpetual miracle.

The eldest of her charge, at the time this story begins, was a girl just arrived at young-ladyhood, and her name was Mary. Now we know that

people very seldom have stories written about them, who have not sylph-like forms, and glorious eyes, or, at least, "a certain inexpressible charm diffused over their whole person." But stories have of late so much abounded, that they actually seem to have used up all the eyes, hair, teeth, lips, and forms necessary for a heroine, so that no one can now pretend to find an original collection wherewith to set one forth. These things considered, I regard it as fortunate that my heroine was not a beauty. She looked neither like a sylph, nor an oread, nor a fairy; she had neither "*l'air distingue*" nor "*l'air magnifique*," but bore a great resemblance to a real mortal girl, such as you might pass a dozen of without any particular comment; one of those appearances which, though common as water, may like that, be coloured any way by the associations you connect with it. Accordingly, a faultless taste in dress, a perfect ease and gaiety of manner, a constant flow of kindly feeling, seemed, in her case, to produce all the effect of beauty. Her manners had just dignity enough to repel impertinence, without destroying the careless freedom and sprightliness in which she commonly indulged. No person had a

merrier run of stories, songs, and village traditions, and all those odds and ends of character which form the materials for animated conversation. She had read, too, everything she could find: Rollin's History, and Scott's Family Bible, that stood in the glass bookcase in the best room, and an odd volume of Shakspeare, and now and then one of Scott's novels, borrowed from a somewhat literary family in the neighbourhood. She also kept an album to write her thoughts in, and was in a constant habit of cutting out all the pretty poetry from the corners of the newspapers, besides drying a number of forget-me-nots and rosebuds, in memory of different particular friends, with a number of other little sentimental practices to which young ladies of sixteen and thereabout are addicted. She was also endowed with great constructiveness; so that, in this day of ladies' fairs, there was nothing, from bellows needle-books down to web-footed pincushions, to which she could not turn her hand. Her sewing certainly *was* extraordinary (we think too little is made of this in the accomplishments of heroines), her stitching was like rows of pearls, and her cross-stitching was fairy-like; and for sewing over-and-over, as the

village school ma'am hath it, she had not her equal. And what shall we say of her pies and puddings! They would have converted the most reprobate old bachelor in the world. And then her sweeping and dusting! "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all!"

And now, what do you suppose is coming next? Why, a young gentleman, of course; for about this time comes to settle in the village, and take charge of the academy, a certain William Barton. Mrs. Abigail denominated him cousin, and he had not been boarded in the house more than a week, and made sundry observations on Miss Mary, before he determined to call her cousin too, which he accomplished in the most natural way in the world.

Mary was at first somewhat afraid of him, because she had heard that he had studied through all that was to be studied in Greek, and Latin, and German too; and she saw a library of books in his room, that made her sigh every time she looked at them, to think how much there was to be learned of which she was ignorant. But all this wore away, and presently they were the best

friends in the world. He gave her books to read, and he gave her lessons in French, nothing puzzled by that troublesome verb which must be first conjugated, whether in French, Latin, or English. Then he gave her a deal of good advice about the cultivation of her mind and the formation of her character, all of which was very improving, and tended greatly to consolidate their friendship. But, unfortunately for Mary, William made quite as favourable an impression on the female community generally as he did on her, having several times distinguished himself on public occasions. He had been known, also, to write poetry, and had a retired and romantic air greatly bewitching to those who read Bulwer's novels. In short, it was morally certain, according to all rules of evidence, that if he had chosen to pay any lady of the village a dozen visits a-week, she would have considered it as her duty to entertain him.

William did visit; for, like many studious people, he found a need for the excitement of society; but, whether it was party or singing-school, he walked home with Mary, of course, in as steady and domestic a manner as any man who has been married a twelvemonth. His air in conversing with her

was inevitably more confidential than with any other one, and this was cause for envy in many a gentle breast, and an interesting diversity of reports with regard to her manner of treating the young gentleman went forth into the village.

"I wonder Mary Taylor will laugh and joke so much with William Barton in company," said one. "Her manners are altogether too free," said another. "It is evident she has designs upon him," remarked a third; "and she cannot even conceal it," pursued a forth.

Some sayings of this kind at length reached the ears of Mrs. Abigail, who had the best heart in the world, and was so indignant that it might have done your heart good to see her. Still, she thought it showed that "the girl needed *advising*," and "she should *talk* to Mary about the matter."

But she first concluded to advise with William on the subject, and therefore, after dinner, the same day, while he was looking over a treatise on trigonometry or conic sections, she commenced upon him:

"Our Mary is growing up a fine girl."

William was intent on solving a problem, and

only understanding that something had been said, mechanically answered "Yes."

"A little wild or so," said Mrs. Abigail.

"I know it," said William, fixing his eyes earnestly on E, F, B, C.

"Perhaps you think her a little too talkative and free with you sometimes; you know girls do not always think what they do."

"Certainly," said William, going on with his problem.

"I think you had better speak to her about it," said Mrs. Abigail.

"I think so too," said William, musing over his completed work, till at length he arose, put it in his pocket, and went to school.

Oh, this unlucky concentrativeness! How many shocking things a man may endorse by the simple habit of saying "Yes" and "No," when he is not hearing what is said to him.

The next morning, when William was gone to the academy, and Mary was washing the breakfast things, Aunt Abigail introduced the subject with great tact and delicacy by remarking,

"Mary, I guess you had better be rather less free with William than you have been.

"Free!" said Mary, starting and nearly dropping the cup from her hand; "why, aunt, what *do* you mean?"

"Why, Mary, you must not always be, around, so free in talking with him, at home, and in company, and everywhere. It won't do." The colour started into Mary's cheek, and mounted even to her forehead, as she answered with a dignified air,

"I have not been too free—I know what is right and proper—I have not been doing any thing that was improper."

Now, when one is going to give advice, it is very troublesome to have its necessity thus called in question, and Mrs. Abigail, who was fond of her own opinion, felt called upon to defend it.

"Why, yes you have, Mary; everybody in the village notices it."

"I don't care what everybody in the village says —I shall always do what I think proper," retorted the young lady; "I know cousin William does not think so."

"Well, *I* think he does—from some things I have heard him say."

"Oh, aunt! what have you heard him say?"

said Mary, nearly upsetting a chair in the eagerness with which she turned to her aunt.

"Mercy on us! you need not knock the house down, Mary; I don't remember exactly about it, only that his way of speaking made me think so."

"Oh, aunt, do tell me what it was, and all about it," said Mary, following her aunt, who went around dusting the furniture.

Mrs. Abigail, like most obstinate people, who feel that they have gone too far, and yet are ashamed to go back, took refuge in an obstinate generalization, and only asserted that she had heard him say things, as if he did not quite like her ways.

This is the most consoling of all methods in which to leave a matter of this kind for a person of active imagination. Of course, in five minutes, Mary had settled in her mind a string of remarks that would have been suited to any of her village companions, as coming from her cousin. All the improbability of the thing vanished in the absorbing consideration of its possibility; and, after a moment's reflection, she pressed her lips together in a very firm way, and remarked that "Mr. Bar-

ton would have no occasion to say such things again."

It was very evident, from her heightened colour and dignified air, that her state of mind was very heroical. As for poor Aunt Abigail, she felt sorry she had vexed her, and addressed herself most earnestly to her consolation, remarking, "Mary, I don't suppose William meant anything. He knows you don't mean anything wrong."

"Don't *mean* anything wrong!" said Mary, indignantly.

"Why, child, he thinks you don't know much about folks and things, and if you have been a little——"

"But I have not been. It was he that talked with me first; it was he that did everything first; he called me cousin—and he *is* my cousin."

"No, child, you are mistaken; for you remember his grandfather was——"

"I don't care who his grandfather was; he has no right to think of me as he does."

"Now, Mary, don't go to quarrelling with him; he can't help his thoughts, you know."

"I don't care what he thinks," said Mary, flinging out of the room with tears in her eyes.

Now when a young lady is in such a state of affliction, the first thing to be done is to sit down and cry for two hours or more, which Mary accomplished in the most thorough manner; in the meanwhile making many reflections on the instability of human friendships, and resolving never to trust any one again as long as she lived, and thinking that this was a cold and hollow-hearted world, together with many other things she had read in books, but never realized so forcibly as at present. But what was to be done? Of course, she did not wish to speak a word to William again, and wished he did not board there; and, finally, she put on her bonnet, and determined to go over to her other aunt's in the neighbourhood, and spend the day, so that she might not see him at dinner.

But it so happened that Mr. William, on coming home to dinner, found himself unaccountably lonesome during school recess for dinner, and hearing where Mary was, determined to call after school at night at her aunt's, and attend her home.

Accordingly, in the afternoon, as Mary was sitting in the parlour with two or three cousins, Mr. William entered.

Mary was so anxious to look just as if nothing

was the matter, that she turned away her head and began to look out of the window just as the young gentleman came up to speak to her. So, after he had twice inquired after her health, she drew up very coolly and said,

"Did you speak to me, sir?"

William looked a little surprised at first, but seating himself by her, "To be sure," said he; "and I came to know why you ran away without leaving any message for me?"

"It did not occur to me," said Mary, in the dry tone which, in a lady, means "I will excuse you from any farther conversation, if you please." William felt as if there was something different from common in all this, but thought that perhaps he was mistaken, and so continued:

"What a pity, now, that you should be so careless of me, when I was so thoughtful of you! I have come all this distance to see how you do."

"I am sorry to have given you the trouble," said Mary.

"Cousin, are you unwell to-day?" said William.

"No, sir;" said Mary, going on with her sewing

There was something so marked and decisive in

all this, that William could scarcely believe his ears. He turned away, and commenced a conversation with a young lady; and Mary, to show that she could talk if she chose, commenced relating a story to her cousins, and presently they were all in a loud laugh.

"Mary has been full of her knick-knacks to-day," said her old uncle, joining them.

William looked at her: she never seemed brighter or in better spirits, and he began to think that even Cousin Mary might puzzle a man sometimes.

He turned away, and began a conversation with old Mr. Harper on the raising of buckwheat, a subject which evidently required profound thought, for he never looked more grave, not to say melancholy.

Mary glanced that way, and was struck with the sad and almost severe expression with which he was listening to the details of Mr. Harper, and was convinced that he was no more thinking of buckwheat than she was.

"I never thought of hurting his feelings so much," said she, relenting; "after all, he has been very kind to me. But he might have told me

about it, and not somebody else." And hereupon she cast another glance towards him.

William was not talking, but sat with his eyes fixed on the snuffer-tray, with an intense gravity of gaze that quite troubled her, and she could not help again blaming herself.

"To be sure! Aunt was right; he could not help his thoughts. I will try to forget it," thought she.

Now you must not think Mary was sitting still and gazing during this soliloquy. No, she was talking and laughing, apparently the most unconcerned spectator in the room. So passed the evening till the little company broke up.

"I am ready to attend you home," said William, in a tone of cold and almost haughty deference.

"I am obliged to you," said the young lady, in a similar tone, "but I shall stay all night;" then, suddenly changing her tone, she said, "No, I cannot keep it up any longer. I will go home with you, Cousin William."

"Keep up what?" said William, with surprise.

Mary was gone for her bonnet. She came out, took his arm, and walked on a little way.

"You have advised me always to be frank, cousin," said Mary, "and I must and will be; so I shall tell you all, though I dare say it is not according to rule."

"All what?" said William.

"Cousin," said she, not at all regarding what he said, "I was very much vexed this afternoon."

"So I perceived, Mary."

"Well, it is vexatious," she continued, "though, after all, we cannot expect people to think us perfect; but I did not think it quite fair in you not to tell *me*."

"Tell you what, Mary?"

Here they came to a place where the road turned through a small patch of woods. It was green and shady, and enlivened by a lively chatterbox of a brook. There was a mossy trunk of a tree that had fallen beside it, and made a pretty seat. The moonlight lay in little patches upon it, as it streamed down through the branches of the trees. It was a fairy-looking place, and Mary stopped and sat down, as if to collect her thoughts. After picking up a stick, and playing a moment in the water, she began:

"After all, cousin, it was very natural in you to

say so, if you thought so; though I should not have supposed you would think so."

"Well, I should be glad if I could know what it is," said William, in a tone of patient resignation.

"Oh, I forgot that I had not told you," said she, pushing back her hat, and speaking like one determined to go through with the thing. "Why, cousin, I have been told that you spoke of my manners towards yourself as being freer—more—obtrusive than they should be. And now," said she, her eyes flashing, "you see it was not a very easy thing to tell you, but I began with being frank, and I will be so, for the sake of satisfying *myself*."

To this William simply replied, "Who told you this, Mary?"

"My aunt."

"Did she say I said it to her?"

"Yes; and I do not so much object to your saying it as to your *thinking* it, for you know I did not force myself on your notice; it was you who sought my acquaintance and won my confidence; and that you, above all others, should think of me in this way!"

"I never did think so, Mary," said William, quietly.

"Nor ever *said* so?"

"Never. I should think you might have *known* it, Mary."

"But—" said Mary.

"But," said William, firmly, "Aunt Abigail is certainly mistaken."

"Well, I am glad of it," said Mary, looking relieved, and gazing in the brook. Then looking up with warmth, "and, cousin, you never must think so. I am ardent, and I express myself freely; but I never meant, I am sure I never *should* mean, anything more than a sister might say."

"And are you sure you never could, if all my happiness depended on it, Mary?"

She turned and looked up in his face, and saw a look that brought conviction. She rose to go on, and her hand was taken and drawn into the arm of her cousin, and that was the end of the first and the last difficulty that ever arose between them.

FRANKNESS.

Where then to find the spell that flings
His fetter on those wav'ring wings?
'Tis in the native truth of heart
That scorns the thought of female art,
That keenly thrill'd by joy or pain,
Disdains the thrill to hide or feign.

CROLY.

THERE is one kind of frankness, which is the result of perfect unsuspiciousness, and which requires a measure of ignorance of the world and of life: this kind appeals to our generosity and tenderness. There is another which is the frankness of a strong but pure mind, acquainted with life, clear in its discrimination and upright in its intention, yet above disguise or concealment: this kind excites respect. The first seems to proceed simply from impulse, the second from impulse and reflection united; the first proceeds, in a measure, from ignorance, the second from knowledge; the first is born from an

undoubting confidence in others, the second from a virtuous and well-grounded reliance on one's self.

It was said of Alice H—— that she had the mind of a man, the heart of a woman, and the face of an angel: a combination that all my readers will think peculiarly happy.

There never was a woman who was so unlike the mass of society in her modes of thinking and acting, yet so generally popular. But the most remarkable thing about her was her proud superiority to all disguise, in thought, word, and deed. She pleased you; for she spoke out a hundred things that you would conceal, and spoke them with a dignified assurance that made you wonder that you had ever hesitated to say them yourself. Nor did this unreserve appear like the weakness of one who could not conceal, or like a determination to make war on the forms of society. It was rather a calm, well-guided integrity, regulated by a just sense of propriety; knowing when to be silent, but speaking the truth when it spoke at all.

Her extraordinary frankness often beguiled superficial observers into supposing themselves fully acquainted with her real character long before they were, as the beautiful transparency of some

lakes is said to deceive the eye as to their depth; yet the longer you knew her, the more variety and compass of character appeared through the same transparent medium. But you may just visit Miss Alice for half-an-hour to-night, and judge for yourselves. You may walk into this little parlour. There sits Miss Alice on that sofa, sewing a pair of lace sleeves into a satin dress, in which peculiarly angelic employment she may persevere till we have finished another sketch.

Do you see that pretty little lady, with sparkling eyes, elastic form, and beautiful hand and foot, that is sitting opposite to her? She is a belle: the character is written in her face—it sparkles from her eye—it dimples in her smile, and pervades the whole woman.

But there—Alice has risen, and is gone to the mirror, and is arranging the finest auburn hair in the world in the most tasteful manner. The little lady watches every motion as comically as a kitten watches a pin-ball.

"It is all in vain to deny it, Alice—you are really anxious to *look pretty* this evening," said she.

"I certainly am," said Alice, quietly.

"Ay, and you hope you shall please Mr. A. and Mr. B.," said the little accusing angel.

"Certainly I do," said Alice, as she twisted her fingers in a beautiful curl.

"Well, I would not tell of it, Alice, if I did."

"Then you should not ask me," said Alice.

"I *declare!* Alice!"

"And what do you declare?"

"I never saw such a girl as you are!"

"Very likely," said Alice, stooping to pick up a pin.

"Well, for *my* part," said the little lady, "I never would take any pains to make anybody like me—*particularly* a gentleman."

"I would," said Alice, "if they would not like me without."

"Why, Alice! I should not think you were so fond of admiration."

"I like to be admired very much," said Alice, returning to the sofa, "and I suppose everybody else does."

"*I* don't care about admiration," said the little lady. "I would be as well satisfied that people shouldn't like me as that they should."

"Then, cousin, I think it's a pity we all like

you so well," said Alice, with a good-humoured smile. If Miss Alice had penetration, she never made a severe use of it.

"But really, cousin," said the little lady, "I should not think such a girl as you would think anything about dress, or admiration, and all that."

"I don't know what sort of a girl you think I am," said Alice, "but, for my own part, *I* only pretend to be a common human being, and am not ashamed of common human feelings. If God has made us so that we love admiration, why should we not honestly say so. *I* love it—*you* love it—everybody loves it; and why should not everybody say it?"

"Why, yes," said the little lady, "I suppose everybody has a—has a—a general love for admiration. I am willing to acknowledge that *I* have; but—"

"But you have no love for it in particular," said Alice, "I suppose you mean to say; that is just the way the matter is commonly disposed of. Everybody is willing to acknowledge a general wish for the good opinion of others, but half the world are ashamed to own it when it comes to a particular case. Now I have made up my mind,

that if it is correct in general, it is correct in particular, and I mean to own it both ways."

"But, somehow, it seems mean!" said the little lady.

"It is mean to live for it, to be selfishly engrossed in it, but not mean to enjoy it when it comes, or even to seek it, if we neglect no higher interest in doing so. All that God made us to feel is dignified and pure, unless we pervert it."

"But, Alice, I never heard any person speak out so frankly as you do."

"Almost all that is innocent and natural may be spoken out; and as for that which is not innocent and natural, it ought not even to be thought."

"But *can* everything be spoken that may be thought?" said the lady.

"No; we have an instinct which teaches us to be silent sometimes: but, if we speak at all, let it be in simplicity and sincerity."

"Now, for instance, Alice," said the lady, "it is very innocent and natural, as you say, to think this, that, and the other good thing of yourself, especially when everybody is telling you of it; now, would you speak the truth if any one asked you on this point?"

"If it were a person who had a right to ask, and if it were a proper time and place, I would," said Alice.

"Well, then," said the bright lady, "I ask you, Alice, in this very proper time and place, do you think that you are handsome?"

"Now I suppose you expect me to make a courtesy to every chair in the room before I answer," said Alice; "but, dispensing with that ceremony, I will tell you fairly, I think I am."

"Do you think that you are good?"

"Not entirely," said Alice.

"Well, but don't you think you are better than most people?"

"As far as I can tell, I think I am better than some people; but really, cousin, I don't trust my own judgment in this matter," said Alice.

"Well, Alice, one more question. Do you think James Martyrs likes you or me best?"

"I do not know," said Alice.

"I did not ask you what you knew, but what you thought," said the lady; "you must have some thought about it."

"Well, then, I think he likes me best," said Alice.

Just then the door opened, and in walked the

identical James Martyrs. Alice blushed, looked a little comical, and went on with her sewing, while the little lady began,

"Really, Mr. James, I wish you had come a minute sooner, to hear Alice's confessions."

"What has she confessed?" said James.

"Why, that she is handsomer and better than most folks."

"That's nothing to be ashamed of," said James.

"Oh, that's not all; she wants to look pretty, and loves to be admired, and all—"

"It sounds very much like her," said James, looking at Alice.

"Oh, but, besides that," said the lady, "she has been preaching a discourse in justification of vanity and self-love—"

"And next time you shall take notes when I preach," said Alice, "for I don't think your memory is remarkably happy."

"You see, James," said the lady, "that Alice makes it a point to say exactly the truth when she speaks at all, and I've been puzzling her with questions. I really wish you would ask her some, and see what she will say. But, mercy! there is Uncle C. come to take me to ride. I must run."

And off flew the little humming-bird, leaving James and Alice *tete-a-tete.*

"There really is one question—" said James, clearing his voice.

Alice looked up.

"There is one question, Alice, which I wish you *would* answer."

Alice did not inquire what the question was, but began to look very solemn; and just then the door was shut—and so I never knew what it was that Alice's friend James wanted to be enlightened about.

FEELING.

Some wander through a rugged way
Forsaken and opprest;
While others cheer'd by Fortune's ray,
Through Pleasure's laughing region stray,
In rainbow colours drest.

F. HEMANS.

THERE is one way of studying human nature, which surveys mankind only as a set of instruments for the accomplishment of personal plans. There is another, which regards them simply as a gallery of pictures, to be admired or laughed at as the caricature or the *beau ideal* predominates. A third way regards them as human beings, having hearts that can suffer and enjoy, that can be improved or be ruined; as those who are linked to us by mysterious reciprocal influences, by the common dangers of a present existence, and th uncertain ties of a future one; as presenting

wherever we meet them, claims on our sympathy and assistance.

Those who adopt the last method are interested in human beings, not so much by *present* attractions as by their capabilities as intelligent, immortal beings; by a high belief of what every mind may attain in an immortal existence; by anxieties for its tempations and dangers, and often by the perception of errors and faults which threaten its ruin. The two first modes are adopted by the great mass of society; the last is the office of those few scattered stars in the sky of life, who look down on its dark selfishness to remind us that there is a world of light and love.

To this class did *He* belong, whose rising and setting on earth were for "the healing of the nations;" and to this class has belonged many a pure and devoted spirit—like him, shining to cheer—like him, fading away into the heavens. To this class many a one *wishes* to belong, who has an eye to distinguish the divinity of virtue, without the resolution to attain it; who, while they sweep along with the selfish current of society, still regret that society is not different—that they themselves are not different. If this train of

thought has no very particular application to what follows, it was nevertheless suggested by it, and of its relevancy others must judge.

Look into this school-room. It is a warm, sleepy afternoon in July; there is scarcely air enough to stir the leaves of the tall buttonwood-tree before the door, or to lift the loose leaves of the copybook in the window; the sun has been diligently shining into those curtainless west windows ever since three o'clock, upon those blotted and mangled desks, and those decrepit and tottering benches, and that great arm-chair, the high place of authority.

You can faintly hear, about the door, the "craw, craw," of some neighbouring chickens, who have stepped around to consider the dinner-baskets, and pick up the crumbs of the noon's repast. For a marvel, the busy school is still, because, in truth, it is too warm to stir. You will find nothing to disturb your meditation on character, for you cannot hear the beat of those little hearts, nor the bustle of all those busy thoughts.

Now look around. Who of these is the most interesting? Is it that tall, slender, hazel-eyed *boy,* with a glance like a falcon, whose elbows rest

on his book as he gazes out on the great button-wood tree, and is calculating how he shall fix his squirrel-trap when school is out? Or is it that curly-headed little rogue, who is shaking with repressed laughter at seeing a chicken roll over in a dinner-basket? Or is it that arch boy with black eyelashes, and deep, mischievous dimple in his cheeks, who is slyly fixing a fishhook to the skirts of the master's coat, yet looking as abstracted as Archimedes whenever the good man turns his head that way? No; these are intelligent, bright, beautiful, but it is not these.

Perhaps, then, it is that sleepy little girl, with golden curls and a mouth like a half-blown rose-bud? See! the small brass thimble has fallen to the floor, her patchwork drops from her lap, her blue eyes close like two sleepy violets, her little head is nodding, and she sinks on her sister's shoulder; surely it is she. No, it is not.

But look in that corner: do you see that boy with such a gloomy countenance—so vacant, yet so ill-natured? He is doing nothing, and he very seldom does anything. He is surly and gloomy in his looks and actions. He never showed any more aptitude for saying or doing a pretty thing,

than his straight white hair does for curling. He is regularly blamed and punished every day, and the more he is blamed and punished, the worse he grows. None of the boys and girls in school will play with him, or if they do, they will be sorry for it. And every day the master assures him that "he does not know what to do with him," and that he "makes him more trouble than any boy in school," with similar judicious information, that has a striking tendency to promote improvement. That is the boy to whom I apply the title of "the most interesting one."

He is interesting because he is *not* pleasing; because he has bad habits; because he does wrong; because he is always likely to do wrong. He is interesting because he has become what he is now by means of the very temperament which often makes the noblest virtue. It is feeling, acuteness of feeling, which has given that countenance its expression, that character its moroseness.

He has no father, and that long-suffering friend, his mother, is gone too. Yet he has relations, and kind ones too; and, in the compassionate language of worldly charity, it may be said of him,

"He would have nothing of which to complain, if he would only behave himself."

His little sister is always bright, always pleasant and cheerful; and his friends say, "Why should not he be so too? he is in exactly the same circumstances." No, he is not. In one circumstance they differ. He has a mind to feel and remember almost everything that can pain him; she can feel and remember but little. If you blame him, he is exasperated, gloomy, and cannot forget it. If you blame her, she can say she has done wrong in a moment, and all is forgotten. Her mind can no more be wounded than the little brook where she loves to play. The bright waters close in a moment, and smile and prattle as merry as before.

Which is the most desirable temperament? It would be hard to say. The power of feeling is necessary for all that is noble in man, and yet it involves the greatest risks. They who catch at happiness on the bright surface of things, secure a portion, such as it is, with more certainty; those who dive for it in the waters of deep feeling, if they succeed, will bring up pearls and diamonds, but if they sink they are lost forever!

But now comes Saturday, and school is just out.

Can any one of my readers remember the rapturous prospect of a long, bright Saturday afternoon? "Where are you going?" "Will you come and see me?" "We are going a fishing!" Let us go a strawberrying!" may be heard rising from the happy group. But no one comes near the ill-humoured James, and the little party going to visit his sister "wish James was out of the way." He sees every motion, hears every whisper, knows, suspects, feels it all, and turns to go home more sullen and ill-tempered than common. The world looks dark—nobody loves him—and he is told that it is "all his own fault," and that makes the matter still worse.

When the little party arrive, he is suspicious and irritable, and, of course, soon excommunicated. Then, as he stands in disconsolate anger, looking over the garden fence at the gay group making dandelion chains, and playing baby-house under the trees, he wonders why he is not like other children. He wishes he were different, and yet he does not know what to do. He looks around, and everything is blooming and bright. His little bed of flowers is even brighter and sweeter than ever *before, and a new rose* is just opening on his rose-bush.

There goes pussy too, racing and scampering, with little Ellen after her, in among the alleys and flowers; and the birds are singing in the trees; and the soft winds brush the blossoms of the sweet-pea against his cheek; and yet, though all nature looks on him so kindly, he is wretched.

Let us now change the scene. Why is that crowded assembly so attentive—so silent? Who is speaking? It is our old friend, the little disconsolate schoolboy. But his eyes are flashing with intellect, his face fervent with emotion, his voice breathes like music, and every mind is enchained.

Again, it is a splendid sunset, and yonder enthusiast meets it face to face, as a friend. He is silent —rapt—happy. He feels the poetry which God has written; he is touched by it, as God meant that the feeling spirit should be touched.

Again, he is watching by the bed of sickness, and it is blessed to have such a watcher! anticipating every want; relieving, not in a cold, uninterested way, but with the quick perceptions, the tenderness, the gentleness of an angel.

Follow him into the circle of friendship, and why is he so loved and trusted? Why can you so easily tell to him what you can say to no one

else besides? Why is it that all around him feel that he can understand, appreciate, be touched by all that touches them?

And when heaven uncloses its doors of light—when all its knowledge, its purity, its bliss, rises on the eye and passes into the soul, who then will be looked on as the one who might be envied—he who *can*, or he who *cannot feel*?

THE SEMPSTRESS.

Few, save the poor, feel for the poor;
The rich know not how hard
It is to be of needful food
And needful rest debarr'd.

Their paths are paths of plenteousness,
They sleep on silk and down;
They never think how wearily
The weary head lies down.

They never by the window sit,
And see the gay pass by,
Yet take their weary work again,
And with a mournful eye.

L. E. L.

HOWEVER fine and elevated, in a sentimental point of view, may have been the poetry of this gifted writer, we think we have never seen anything from this source that *ought* to give a better opinion of her than the little ballad from which the above verses are taken.

They show that the accomplished authoress

possessed, not merely a knowledge of the dreamy ideal wants of human beings, but the more pressing and homely ones, which the fastidious and poetical are often the last to appreciate. The sufferings of poverty are not confined to those of the common, squalid, every-day-inured to hardships, and ready, with open hand, to receive charity, let it come to them as it will. There is another class on whom it presses with still heavier power: the generous, the decent, the self-respecting, who have struggled with their lot in silence, "bearing all things, hoping all things," and willing to endure all things, rather than breathe a word of complaint, or to acknowledge, even to themselves, that their own efforts will not be sufficient for their own necessities.

Pause with me a while at the door of yonder small room, whose small window overlooks a little court below. It is inhabited by a widow and her daughter, dependent entirely on the labours of the needle, and those other slight and precarious resources, which are all that remain to woman when left to struggle her way "through this bleak world alone." It contains all their small earthly store, *and there* is scarce an article of its little stock of

furniture that has not been thought of, and toiled for, and its price calculated over and over again, before every thing could come right for its purchase. Every article is arranged with the utmost neatness and care; nor is the most costly furniture of a fashionable parlour more sedulously guarded from a scratch or a rub, than is that brightly-varnished bureau, and that neat cherry tea-table and bedstead. The floor, too, boasted once a carpet; but old Time has been busy with it, picking a hole here, and making a thin place there; and though the old fellow has been followed up by the most indefatigable zeal in darning, the marks of his mischievous fingers are too plain to be mistaken. It is true, a kindly neighbour has given a bit of faded baize, which has been neatly clipped and bound, and spread down over an entirely unmanageable hole in front of the fire-place; and other places have been repaired with pieces of different colours; and yet, after all, it is evident that the poor carpet is not long for this world.

But the best face is put upon everything. The little cupboard in the corner, that contains a few china cups, and one or two antiquated silver spoons, relics of better days, is arranged with jealous neat-

ness, and the white muslin window-curtain, albeit the muslin be old, has been carefully whitened, and starched, and smoothly ironed, and put up with exact precision; and on the bureau, covered by a snowy cloth, are arranged a few books and other memorials of former times, and a faded miniature, which, though it have little about it to interest a stranger, is more precious to the poor widow than everything besides.

Mrs. Ames is seated in her rocking-chair, supported by a pillow, and busy cutting out work, while her daughter, a slender, sickly-looking girl, is sitting by the window, intent on some fine stitching.

Mrs. Ames, in former days, was the wife of a respectable merchant, and the mother of an affectionate family. But evil fortune had followed her with a steadiness that seemed like the stern decree of some adverse fate rather than the ordinary dealings of a merciful Providence. First came a heavy run of losses in business; then long and expensive sickness in the family, and the death of children. Then there was the selling of the large house and elegant furniture, to retire to a humbler *style of living*; and, finally, the sale of all the

property, with the view of quitting the shores of a native land, and commencing life again in a new one. But scarcely had the exiled family found themselves in the port of a foreign land, when the father was suddenly smitten down by the hand of death, and his lonely grave made in a land of strangers. The widow, broken-hearted and discouraged, had still a wearisome journey before her ere she could reach any whom she could consider as her friends. With her two daughters, entirely unattended, and with her finances impoverished by detention and sickness, she performed the tedious journey.

Arrived at the place of her destination, she found herself not only without immediate resources, but considerably in debt to one who had advanced money for her travelling expenses. With silent endurance she met the necessities of her situation. Her daughters, delicately reared, and hitherto carefully educated, were placed out to service, and Mrs. Ames sought for employment as a nurse. The younger child fell sick, and the hard earnings of the mother were all exhausted in the care of her; and though she recovered in part, she was declared by her physician to be the victim

of a disease which would never leave her till it terminated her life.

As soon, however, as her daughter was so far restored as not to need her immediate care, Mrs. Ames resumed her laborious employment. Scarcely had she been able, in this way, to discharge the debts for her journey and to furnish the small room we have described, when the hand of disease was laid heavily on herself. Too resolute and persevering to give way to the first attacks of pain and weakness, she still continued her fatiguing employment till her system was entirely prostrated. Thus all possibility of pursuing her business was cut off, and nothing remained but what could be accomplished by her own and her daughter's dexterity at the needle. It is at this time we ask you to look in upon the mother and daughter.

Mrs. Ames is sitting up, the first time for a week, and even to-day she is scarcely fit to do so: but she remembers that the month is coming round, and her rent will soon be due; and even in her feebleness she will stretch every nerve to meet her engagements with punctilious exactness.

Wearied at length with cutting out, and measuring, and drawing threads, she leans back in her

chair, and her eye rests on the pale face of her daughter, who has been sitting for two hours intent on her stitching.

"Ellen, my child, your head aches; don't work so steadily."

"Oh no, it don't ache *much*," said she, too conscious of looking very much tired. Poor girl, had she remained in the situation in which she was born, she would now have been skipping about, and enjoying life as other young girls of fifteen do; but now there is no choice of employments for her—no youthful companions—no visiting—no pleasant walks in the fresh air. Evening and morning, it is all the same; headache or sideache, it is all one. She must hold on the same unvarying task; a wearisome thing for a girl of fifteen!

But see, the door opens, and Mrs. Ames's face brightens as her other daughter enters. Mary has become a domestic in a neighbouring family, where her faithfulness and kindness of heart have caused her to be regarded more as a daughter and a sister than as a servant. "Here, mother, is your rent-money," she exclaimed, "so do put up your work and rest a while. I can get enough to pay it next time before the month comes round again."

"Dear child! I do wish you would ever think to get anything for yourself," said Mrs. Ames; "I cannot consent to use up all your earnings, as I have done lately, and all Ellen's too: you must have a new dress this spring, and that bonnet of yours is not decent any longer."

"Oh no, mother; I have fixed over my blue calico, and you will be surprised to see how well it looks; and my best frock, when it is washed and darned, will answer some time longer. And then Mrs. Grant has given me a riband, and when my bonnet is whitened and trimmed it will look very well. And so," she added, "I brought you some wine this afternoon; you know the doctor says you need wine."

"Dear child! I want to see you take some comfort of your money yourself."

"Well, I do take comfort of it, mother. It is more comfort to be able to help you than to wear all the finest dresses in the world."

Two months from this dialogue found our little family still more straitened and perplexed. Mrs. Ames had been confined all the time with sickness, and the greater part of Ellen's time and strength was occupied with attending to her.

Very little sewing could the poor girl now do, in the broken intervals that remained to her; and the wages of Mary were not only used as fast as she earned, but she anticipated two months in advance.

Mrs. Ames had been better for a day or two, and had been sitting up, exerting all her strength to finish a set of shirts which had been sent in to make. "The money for them will just pay our rent," sighed she; "and if we can do a little more this week—"

"Dear mother, you are so tired," said Ellen, "do lie down, and not worry any more till I come back."

Ellen went out and passed on till she came to the door of an elegant house, whose damask and muslin window-curtains indicated a fashionable residence.

Mrs. Elmore was sitting in her splendidly-furnished parlour, and around her lay various fancy articles, which two young girls were busily unrolling. "What a lovely pink scarf!" said one, throwing it over her shoulders and skipping before a mirror; while the other exclaimed, "Do look at these pocket-handkerchiefs, mother! what elegant lace!"

"Well, girls," said Mrs. Elmore, "these handkerchiefs are a shameful piece of extravagance. I wonder you will insist on having such things."

"La! mamma, everybody has such now; Laura Seymour has half a dozen that cost more than these, and her father is no richer than ours."

"Well," said Mrs. Elmore, "rich or not rich, it seems to make very little odds; we do not seem to have half as much money to spare as we did when we lived in the little house in Spring Street. What with new furnishing the house, and getting everything you boys and girls say you must have, we are poorer, if anything, than we were then."

"Ma'am, here is Mrs. Ames's girl come with some sewing," said the servant.

"Show her in," said Mrs. Elmore.

Ellen entered timidly, and handed her bundle of work to Mrs. Elmore, who forthwith proceeded to a minute scrutiny of the articles; for she prided herself on being very particular as to her sewing. But, though the work had been executed by feeble hands and aching eyes, even Mrs. Elmore could detect no fault in it.

"Well, it is very prettily done," said she; "what does your mother charge?"

Ellen handed a neatly-folded bill which she had drawn for her mother. "I must say, I think your mother's prices are very high," said Mrs. Elmore, examining her nearly empty purse; "everything is getting so dear that one hardly knows how to live." Ellen looked at the fancy articles, and glanced around the room with an air of innocent astonishment. "Ah!" said Mrs. Elmore, "I dare say it seems to you as if persons in our situation had no need of economy; but, for my part, I feel the need of it more and more every day." As she spoke she handed Ellen the small sum, which, though it was not a quarter the price of one of the handkerchiefs, was all that she and her sick mother could claim in the world.

"There," said she; "tell your mother I like her work very much, but I do not think I can afford to employ her, if I can find any one to work cheaper."

Now Mrs. Elmore was not a hard-hearted woman, and if Ellen had come as a beggar to solicit help for her sick mother, Mrs. Elmore would have fitted out a basket of provisions, and sent a bottle of wine, and a bundle of old clothes, and all the *et cetera* of such occasions; but the sight of a

bill always aroused all the instinctive sharpness of her business-like education. She never had the dawning of an idea that it was her duty to pay anybody any more than she could possibly help; nay, she had an indistinct notion that it was her *duty* as an economist to make everybody take as little as possible. When she and her daughters lived in Spring Street, to which she had alluded, they used to spend the greater part of their time at home, and the family sewing was commonly done among themselves. But since they had moved into a large house, and set up a carriage, and addressed themselves to being genteel, the girls found that they had altogether too much to do to attend to their own sewing, much less to perform any for their father and brothers. And their mother found her hands abundantly full in overlooking her large house, in taking care of expensive furniture, and in superintending her increased train of servants. The sewing, therefore, was put out; and Mrs. Elmore *felt it a duty* to get it done the cheapest way she could. Nevertheless, Mrs. Elmore was too notable a lady, and her sons and daughters were altogether too fastidious as to the make and quality of their clothing,

to admit the idea of its being done in any but the most complete and perfect manner.

Mrs. Elmore never accused herself of want of charity for the poor; but she had never considered that the best class of the poor are those who never ask charity. She did not consider that, by paying liberally those who were honestly and independently struggling for themselves, she was really doing a greater charity than by giving indiscriminately to a dozen applicants.

"Don't you think, mother, she says we charge too high for this work!" said Ellen, when she returned. "I am sure she did not know how much work we put in those shirts. She says she cannot give us any more work; she must look out for somebody that will do it cheaper. I do not see how it is that people who live in such houses, and have so many beautiful things, can feel that they cannot afford to pay for what costs us so much."

"Well, child, they are more apt to feel so than people who live plainer."

"Well, I am sure," said Ellen, "we cannot afford to spend so much time, as we have over these shirts, for less money."

"Never mind, my dear," said the mother, sooth-

ingly; "here is a bundle of work that another lady has sent in, and if we get it done we shall have enough for our rent, and something over to buy bread with."

It is needless to carry our readers over all the process of cutting and fitting, and gathering and stitching, necessary in making up six fine shirts. Suffice it to say that on Saturday evening all but one were finished, and Ellen proceeded to carry them home, promising to bring the remaining one on Tuesday morning. The lady examined the work and gave Ellen the money; but on Tuesday, when the child came with the remaining work, she found her in great ill-humour. Upon re-examining the shirts, she had discovered that in some important respects they differed from directions she meant to have given, and supposed she had given, and, accordingly, she vented her displeasure on Ellen.

"Why didn't you make these shirts as I told you?" said she, sharply.

"We did," said Ellen, mildly; "mother measured by the pattern every part, and cut them herself."

"*Your mother* must be a fool, then, to make

such a piece of work. I wish you would just take them back, and alter them over;" and the lady proceeded with the directions, of which neither Ellen nor her mother, till then, had had any intimation. Unused to such language, the frightened Ellen took up her work and slowly walked homeward.

"Oh dear, how my head does ache!" thought she to herself; "and poor mother, she said this morning she was afraid another of her sick turns was coming on, and we have all this work to pull out and do over."

"See here, mother!" said she, with a disconsolate air, as she entered the room; "Mrs. Rudd says, take out all the bosoms, and rip off all the collars, and fix them quite another way. She says they are not like the pattern she sent; but she must have forgotten, for here it is. Look, mother! it is exactly as we made them."

"Well, my child, carry back the pattern, and show her that it is so."

"Indeed, mother, she spoke so cross to me, and looked at me so, that I do not feel as if I could go back."

"I will go for you, then," said the kind Maria

Stephens, who had been sitting with Mrs. Ames while Ellen was out. "I will take the patterns and shirts, and tell her the exact truth about it: I am not afraid of her." Maria Stephens was a cheerful, resolute, go-forward little body, and ready always to give a helping hand to a neighbour in trouble. So she took the pattern and shirts, and set out on her mission.

But poor Mrs. Ames, though she professed to take a right view of the matter, and was very earnest in showing Ellen why she ought not to distress herself about it, still felt a shivering sense of the hardness and unkindness of the world coming over her. The bitter tears would spring to her eyes, in spite of every effort to suppress them, as she sat mournfully gazing on the little faded miniature before mentioned. "When *he* was alive, I never knew what poverty or trouble was," was the thought that often passed through her mind; and how many a poor forlorn one has thought the same!

Poor Mrs. Ames was confined to her bed for most of that week. The doctor gave absolute directions that she should do nothing, and keep *entirely* quiet. A direction very sensible indeed

in the chamber of ease and competence, but hard to be observed in poverty and want.

What pains the kind and dutiful Ellen took that week to make her mother feel easy. How often she replied to her anxious questions "that she was quite well, or that her head did not ache *much;*" and by various other evasive expedients the child tried to persuade herself that she was speaking the truth. And during the times her mother slept, in the day or evening, she accomplished one or two pieces of plain work, with the price of which she expected to surprise her mother.

It was towards evening when Ellen took her finished work to the elegant dwelling of Mrs. Page. "I shall get for this," said she, "enough to pay for mother's wine and medicine."

"This work is done very neatly," said Mrs. Page, "and here is some more I should like to have finished in the same way."

Ellen looked up wistfully, hoping Mrs. Page was going to pay her for the last work. But Mrs. Page was only searching a drawer for a pattern, which she put into Ellen's hands, and after explaining how she wanted her work done, dismissed her without saying a word about the expected payment.

Poor Ellen tried two or three times, as she was going out, to turn round and ask for it, and before she could decide what to say she found herself in the street.

Mrs. Page was an amiable, kind-hearted woman, but one who was so used to large sums of money, that she did not realize how great an affair a small sum might seem to other persons. For this reason, when Ellen had worked incessantly at the new work put into her hands, that she might get the money for all together, she again disappointed her in the payment.

"I'll send the money round to-morrow," said she, when Ellen at last found courage to ask for it. But to-morrow came, and Ellen was forgotten; and it was not till after one or two applications more that the small sum was paid.

But these sketches are already long enough, and let us hasten to close them. Mrs. Ames found liberal friends, who could appreciate and honour her integrity of principle and loveliness of character, and by their assistance she was raised to see more prosperous days; and she, and the delicate Ellen, and warm-hearted Mary, were enabled to *have a home* and fireside of their own, and to enjoy

something like the return of their former prosperity.

We have given these sketches, drawn from real life, because we think there is, in general, too little consideration on the part of those who give employment to those in situations like the widow here described. The giving of employment is a very important branch of charity, inasmuch as it assists that class of the poor who are the most deserving. It should be looked on in this light, and the arrangements of a family be so made that a suitable compensation can be given, and prompt and cheerful payment be made, without the dread of transgressing the rules of economy.

It is better to teach our daughters to do without expensive ornaments or fashionable elegancies; better even to deny ourselves the pleasure of large donations or direct subscriptions to public charities, rather than to curtail the small stipend of her whose "candle goeth not out by night," and who abours with her needle for herself and the helpless dear ones dependent on her exertions.

AUNT MARY

Home is possession at the highest cost—
Keen edge the soonest lost,
Yet who would welcome dearth
For fear his plenty should be famine cross'd?
Be God beside my hearth!

TOWNSEND.

SINCE sketching character is the mode, I too take up my pencil, not to make you laugh, though peradventure it may be—to get you to sleep.

I am now a tolerable old gentleman—an old bachelor, moreover—and, what is more to the point, an unpretending and sober-minded one. Lest, however, any of the ladies should take exceptions against me in the very outset, I will merely remark, *en passant*, that a man can sometimes become an old bachelor because he has *too much heart* as well as too little.

Years ago—before any of my readers were born —I was a little good-for-naught of a boy, of precisely that unlucky kind who are always in everybody's way, and always in mischief. I had, to watch over my uprearing, a father and mother, and a whole army of older brothers and sisters. My relatives bore a very great resemblance to other human beings, neither good angels nor the opposite class, but, as mathematicians say, "in the mean proportion."

As I have before insinuated, I was a sort of family scapegrace among them, and one on whose head all the domestic trespasses were regularly visited, either by real actual desert or by imputation.

For this order of things, there was, I confess, a very solid and serious foundation, in the constitution of my mind. Whether I was born under some cross-eyed planet, or whether I was fairy-smitten in my cradle, certain it is that I was, from the dawn of existence, a sort of "Murad the Unlucky;" an out-of-time, out-of-place, out-of-form sort of a boy, with whom nothing prospered.

Who always left open doors in cold weather? it was Henry. Who was sure to upset his coffee-cup

at breakfast, or to knock over his tumbler at dinner, or to prostrate salt-cellar, peper-box, and mustard-pot, if he only happened to move his arm? why, Henry. Who was plate-breaker general for the family? it was Henry. Who tangled mamma's silks and cottons, and tore up the last newspaper for papa, or threw down old Phœbe's clothes-horse, with all her clean ironing thereupon? why, Henry.

Now all this was no malicé prepense in me, for I solemnly believe that I was the best natured boy in the world; but something was the matter with the attraction of cohesion, or the attraction of gravitation—with the general dispensation of matter around me, that, let me do what I would, things would fall down, and break, or be torn and damaged, if I only came near them; and my unluckiness seemed in exact proportion to my carefulness in any matter.

If anybody in the room with me had a headache, or any manner of nervous irritability, which made it particularly necessary for others to be quiet, and if I was in an especial desire unto the same, I was sure, while stepping around on tiptoe, to fall headlong over a chair, which would give an introductory

push to the shovel, which would fall upon the tongs, which would animate the poker, and altogether would set in action two or three sticks of wood, and down they would come, with just that hearty, sociable sort of racket, which showed that they were disposed to make as much of the opportunity as possible.

In the same manner, everything that came into my hand, or was at all connected with me, was sure to lose by it. If I rejoiced in a clean apron in the morning, I was sure to make a full-length prostration thereupon on my way to school, and come home nothing better, but rather worse. If I was sent on an errand, I was sure either to lose my money in going, or my purchases in returning; and on these occasions my mother would often comfort me with the reflection, that it was well that my ears were fastened to my head, or I should lose them too. Of course, I was a fair mark for the constant rebukes and admonitions, not only of my parents, but of uncles, aunts, cousins, and officious friends of every degree, who never failed of some troublesome reproof.

All this would have been very well if Nature had not gifted me with a very unnecessary and un-

comfortable capacity of *feeling*, which, like a refined ear for music, is undesirable, because, in this world, one meets with discord ninety-nine times where it meets with harmony once. Much, therefore, as I furnished occasion to be scolded at, I never became *used* to scolding, so that I was just as much galled by it the *forty*-first time as the first. There was no such thing as philosophy in me; I had just that unreasonable heart which is neither conformed nor reconciled to the nature of things. I was timid, and shrinking, and proud; I was nothing to any one around me but an awkward, unlucky boy; nothing to my parents but one of a half dozen children, whose faces were to be washed and stockings mended on Saturday afternoon. If I was very sick, I had medicine and the doctor; if I was a little sick, I was exhorted unto patience; and if I was sick at heart, I was left to prescribe for myself.

Now all this was very well; what should a child need but meat, and drink, and room to play, and a school to teach him reading and writing, and somebody to take care of him when sick? certainly, nothing.

But the feelings of grown-up children exist in the

minds of little ones oftener than is supposed; and I had, even at this early day, the same keen sense of all that touched the heart wrong; the same longing for something which should touch it aright; the same discontent with latent, matter-of-course affection, and the same craving for sympathy, which has been the unprofitable fashion of this world in all ages. And no human being possessing such constitutionals has a better chance of being made unhappy by them than the backward, uninteresting, wrong-doing child. We can all sympathize, to some extent, with *men* and *women;* but how few can go back to the sympathies of childhood; can understand the desolate insignificance of not being one of the *grown-up* people; of being sent to bed, to be *out of the way* in the evening, and to school, to be out of the way in the morning; of manifold similar grievances and distresses which the child has no elocution to set forth, and the grown person no imagination to conceive.

When I was seven years old, I was told one morning, with considerable domestic acclamation, that aunt Mary was coming to make us a visit; and so, when the carriage that brought her stopped at our door, I pulled off my dirty apron, and ran

in among the crowd of brothers and sisters to see what was coming. I shall not describe her first appearance, for as I think of her, I begin to grow somewhat sentimental, in spite of my spectacles, and might, perhaps, talk a little nonsense.

Perhaps every man, whether married or unmarried, who has lived to the age of fifty or thereabout, has seen some woman who, in his mind, is *the* woman in distinction from all others. She may not have been a relative; she may not have been a wife; she may simply have shone on him from afar; she may be remembered in the distance of years as a star that is set, as music that is hushed, as beauty and loveliness faded forever; but *remembered* she is with interest, with fervour, with enthusiasm; with all that heart can feel, and more than words can tell.

To me there has been but one such, and that is she whom I describe. Was she beautiful? you ask. I also will ask you one question: If an angel from heaven should dwell in human form, and animate any human face, would not that face be lovely? It might not be *beautiful*, but would it not be lovely? She was not beautiful except after this fashion.

How well I remember her, as she used sometimes to sit thinking, with her head resting on her hand, her face mild and placid, with a quiet October sunshine in her blue eyes, and an ever-present smile over her whole countenance. I remember the sudden sweetness of look when any one spoke to her; the prompt attention, the quick comprehension of things before you uttered them; the obliging readiness to leave for you whatever she was doing.

To those who mistake occasional pensiveness for melancholy, it might seem strange to say that my Aunt Mary was always happy. Yet she was so. Her spirits never rose to buoyancy, and never sunk to despondency. I know that it is an article in the sentimental confession of faith that such a character cannot be interesting. For this impression there is some ground. The placidity of a medium common-place mind is uninteresting, but the placidity of a strong and well-governed one borders on the sublime. Mutability of emotion characterizes inferior orders of being; but strong self-control, when guided by the principles of virtue and true religion, preserves an even temperament in the well-regulated mind. And while we gaze

with wonder and admiration on the great general or statesman, ever at leisure to bestow all his thoughts on the wants of others, there is somewhat of the same sublimity in the character of that human being who has so quieted and governed the world within, that nothing is left to absorb sympathy or distract attention from those around.

Such a woman was my Aunt Mary. Her placidity was not so much the result of temperament as of choice. She had every susceptibility of suffering incident to the noblest and most delicate construction of mind; but they had been so directed, that, instead of concentrating thought on self, they had prepared her to understand and feel for others.

She was, beyond all things else, a sympathetic person, and her character, like the green in a landscape, was less remarkable for what it was in itself than for its perfect and beautiful harmony with all the colouring and shading around it.

Other women have had talents, others have been good; but no woman that ever I knew possessed goodness and talent in union with such an intuitive perception of feelings, and such a faculty of *instantaneous* adaptation to them. The most trouble-

some thing in this world is to be condemned to the society of a person who can never understand anything you say without you say the whole of it, making your commas and periods as you go along; and the most desirable thing in the world is to live with a person who saves you all the trouble of talking, by knowing just what you mean to say before you begin.

Something of this kind of talent I began to feel, to my great relief, when Aunt Mary came into the family. I remember the very first evening, as she sat by the hearth, surrounded by all the family, her eye glanced on me with an expression that let me know she *saw* me; and when the clock struck eight, and my mother proclaimed that it was my bedtime, my countenance fell as I moved sorrowfully from the back of her rocking-chair, and thought how many beautiful stories Aunt Mary would tell after I was gone to bed. She turned towards me with such a look of real understanding, such an evident insight into the case, that I went into banishment with a lighter heart than ever I did before. How very contrary is the obstinate estimate of the heart to the rational estimate of worldly wisdom. Are there not some who can remember when one

word, one look, or even the withholding of a word, has drawn their heart more to a person than all the substantial favours in the world? By ordinary acceptation, substantial kindness respects the necessaries of animal existence; while those wants which are peculiar to mind, and will exist with it forever, by equally correct classification, are designated as sentimental ones, the supply of which, though it will excite more gratitude in fact, ought not in theory. Before Aunt Mary had lived with us a month, I loved her beyond anybody in the world, and a utilitarian would have been amused in ciphering out the amount of favours which produced this result. It was a look—a word—a smile; it was that she seemed pleased with my new kite; that she rejoiced with me when I learned to spin a top; that she alone seemed to estimate my proficiency in playing ball and marbles; that she never looked at all vexed when I upset her workbox upon the floor; that she received all my awkward gallantary and *mal-adroit* helpfulness as if it had been in the best taste in the world; that when she was sick, she insisted on letting me wait on her, though I made my *customary* havoc among the pitchers and tumblers of

AUNT MARY.

It was a look—a word—a smile; it was that she seemed pleased with my new kite.

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her room, and displayed, through my zeal to please, a more than ordinary share of insufficiency for the station. She also was the only person that ever I *conversed* with, and I used to wonder how anybody who could talk all about matters and things with grown-up persons, could talk so sensibly about marbles, and hoops, and skates, and all sorts of little-boy matters; and I will say, by-the-by, that the same sort of speculation has often occurred to the minds of older people in connexion with her. She knew the value of varied information in making a woman, not a pedant, but a sympathetic, companionable being, and such she was to almost every class of mind.

She had, too, the faculty of drawing others up to her level in conversation, so that I would often find myself going on in most profound style while talking with her, and would wonder, when I was through, whether I was really a little boy still.

When she had enlightened us many months, the time came for her to take leave, and she besought my mother to give me to her for company. All the family wondered what she could find to like in Henry; but if she did like me, it was no matter, and so was the case disposed of.

From that time I *lived* with her—and there are some persons who can make the word *live* signify much more than it commonly does—and she wrought on my character all those miracles which benevolent genius can work. She quieted my heart, directed my feelings, unfolded my mind, and educated me, not harshly, or by force, but as the blessed sunshine educates the flower, into full and perfect life; and when all that was mortal of her died to this world, her words and deeds of unutterable love shed a twilight around her memory that will fade only in the brightness of heaven.

UNCLE TIM AND HIS DAUGHTER GRACE.

A friend indeed, nor less because he claims
A homely bluntness, more than meed of praise
For his benevolent deeds, and by his aims
At other's good, his own true worth displays.

BRYANT.

DID you ever see the little village of Newbury? I dare say you never did; for it was just one of those out-of-the-way places where nobody ever came unless they came on purpose: a green little hollow, wedged like a bird's nest between half-a-dozen high hills, that kept off the wind and kept out foreigners; so that the little place was as straitly "sui generis" as if there were not another in the world. The inhabitants were all of that respectable old standfast family who make it a point to be born, bred, married, die, and be buried all in the self-same spot. There were just so many

houses, and just so many people lived in them; and nobody ever seemed to be sick, or to die either —at least while I was there. The natives grew old till they could not grow any older, and then they stood still, and *lasted* from generation to generation.

As to manners, morals, arts, and sciences, the people in Newbury always went to their parties at three o'clock in the afternoon, and came home before dark; always stopped all work the minute the sun was down on Saturday night; always went to church on Sunday, had a school-house with all the ordinary inconveniences; were in neighbourly charity with each other; and were content with such things as they had—the best philosophy, after all. Such was the place into which Master James Benton made an irruption in the year eighteen hundred and no matter what. Now this James is to be our hero, and he is just the hero for a sensation—at least so you would have thought, if you had been in Newbury the week after his arrival. Master James was one of those whole-hearted, energetic men, who rise in the world as naturally as cork does in water. He possessed a great share *of that* characteristic national trait denominated

acuteness, which signifies an ability to do everything without trying, and to know everything without learning, and to make more use of one's *ignorance* than other people do of their knowledge. This quality in James was mingled with a great elasticity of animal spirits and a buoyant cheerfulness of mind.

As to the personal appearance of our hero, we have not much to say of it. There was a saucy frankness of countenance, a knowing roguery of eye, and a joviality of demeanour, that was wonderfully captivating, especially to the ladies.

It is true that Master James had an uncommonly comfortable opinion of himself, a full faith that there was nothing in creation that he could not learn and could not do; and this faith was maintained with an abounding and triumphant joyfulness, that fairly carried your sympathies along with him, and made you feel quite as much delighted with his qualifications and prospects as he felt himself. There are two kinds of self-sufficiency; one is amusing, and the other is provoking. His was the amusing kind. It seemed, in truth, to be only the buoyancy and overflow of a vivacious mind, delighted with everything that is de-

lightful, in himself or others. He was always ready to magnify his own praise, but quite as ready to exalt his neighbour, if the channel of discourse ran that way: his own perfections being more completely within his knowledge, he rejoiced in them more constantly; but, if those of any one else came within the same range, he was quite as much astonished and edified as if they had been his own.

Master James, at the time of his transit to the town of Newbury, was only eighteen years of age, so that it was difficult to say which predominated in him most, the boy or the man. The belief that he could, and the determination that he would be something in the world, had caused him to abandon his home, and, with all his worldly effects tied in a blue cotton pocket-handkerchief, to proceed to seek his fortune in Newbury. And never did stranger rise to promotion with more unparalleled rapidity, or boast a greater plurality of employment. He figured as schoolmaster all the week, and as chorister on Sundays, and taught singing and reading in the evenings, besides studying Latin and Greek with the minister, nobody knew when; thus fitting for college, while he seemed to be doing everything else in the world besides.

James understood every art and craft of popularity, and made himself mightily at home in all the chimney corners of the region round about; knew the geography of everybody's cider-barrel and apple-bin, helping himself and every one else therefrom with all bountifulness; rejoicing in the good things of this life, devouring the old ladies' doughnuts and apple-pies with most flattering appetite, and appearing equally to relish everybody and thing that came in his way.

The degree and versatility of his acquirements were truly wonderful. He knew all about arithmetic and history, and all about catching squirrels and planting corn; made poetry and hoe-handles with equal celerity; wound yarn and took out grease spots for old ladies, and made nosegays and knick-knacks for young ones. In short, Master James moved on through the place

——— "Victorious,
Happy and glorious,"

welcomed and privileged by everybody in every place; and when he had told his last ghost-story, and fairly flourished himself out of doors at the close of a long winter's evening, you might see the hard face of the good man of the house still glow-

phorescent with his departing radiance, and hear him exclaim, in a paroxysm of admiration, that "James really did beat all—that he was certainly a marvellous fellow!"

It was wonderfully contrary to the buoyant activity of Master James's mind to keep a school. He had, moreover, so much of the boy and the rogue in his composition, that he could not be strict with the iniquities of the curly pates under his charge; and when he saw how determinately every little heart was boiling over with mischief and motion, he felt in his soul more disposed to join in and help them to a frolic, than to lay justice to the line, as was meet. This would have made a sad case, had it not been that the activity of the master's mind communicated itself to his charge, just as the reaction of one brisk little spring will fill a manufactory with motion; so that there was more of an impulse towards study in the golden good-natured day of James Benton, than in the time of all that went before or came after him.

But, when "school was out," James's spirits foamed over as naturally as a tumbler of soda-water, and he could jump over benches and burst out of doors with as much rapture as the veriest

little elf in his company. Then you might have seen him stepping homeward with a most felicitous expression of countenance, occasionally reaching his hand through the fence for a bunch of currants, or over it after a flower, or stopping to pay his devoirs to Aunt This or Mistress That—for James well knew the importance of the "powers that be," and always kept the sunny side of the old ladies.

We shall not answer for James's general flirtations, which were sundry and manifold; for he had just the kindly heart that fell in love with everything in feminine shape that came in his way, and if he had not been blessed with an equal faculty for falling out again, we do not know what ever would have become of him. But at length he came into an abiding captivity, and it is quite time that he should; for, having devoted thus much space to the illustration of our hero, it is fit we should do something in behalf of our heroine; and, therefore, we must beg the reader's attention while we draw a diagram or two that will assist him in gaining a right idea of her.

Do you see yonder brown house, with its broad roof sloping almost to the ground on one side, and a great, unsupported, sun-bonnet of a piazza shoot-

ing out over the front door? You must often have noticed it; you have seen its tall well-sweep, relieved against the clear evening sky, or observed the feather beds and bolsters lounging out of its chamber-windows on a still summer morning; you recollect its gate, that swung with a chain and a great stone; its pantry-window, latticed with little brown slabs, and looking out upon a forest of bean-poles. You remember the zephyrs that used to play among its pea-brush, and shake the long tassels of its corn-patch, and how vainly any zephyr might essay to perform similar flirtations with the considerate cabbages that were solemnly vegetating near by. Then there was the whole neighbourhood of purple-leaved beets and feathery parsnips; there were the billows of gooseberry bushes rolled up by the fence, interspersed with rows of quince-trees; and far off in one corner was one little patch penuriously devoted to ornament, which flamed with marigolds, poppies, snappers, and four-o'clocks.

That is the dwelling of Uncle Timothy Griswold. Uncle Tim, as he was commonly called, had a character that a painter would sketch for its lights and contrasts rather than its symmetry. He was a chestnut burr, abounding with briers without and

with substantial goodness within. He had the strong-grained practical sense, the calculating worldly wisdom of his class of people in New England: he had, too, a kindly heart, but the whole strata of his character was crossed by a vein of surly petulance, that, half-way between joke and earnest, coloured everything that he said and did.

If you asked a favour of Uncle Tim, he generally kept you arguing half-an-hour, to prove that you really needed it, and to tell you that he could not all the while be troubled with helping one body or another, all which time you might observe him regularly making his preparations to grant your request, and see, by an odd glimmer of his eye, that he was preparing to let you hear the conclusion of the whole matter, which was, "Well, well —I guess—I 'spose I must, at least;" so off he would go and work while the day lasted, and then wind up with a farewell exhortation "not to be callin' on your neighbours when you could get along without." If any of Uncle Tim's neighbours were in any trouble, he was always at hand to tell them "that they shouldn't a' done so;" that "it was strange they couldn't had more sense;" and then to close his exhortations by labouring more

diligently than any to bring them out of their difficulties, groaning in spirit, meanwhile, that folks would make people so much trouble.

"Uncle Tim, father wants to know if you will lend him your hoe to-day?" says a little boy, making his way across a corn-field.

"Why don't your father use his own hoe?"

"Ours is broke."

"Broke! How came it broke?"

"I broke it yesterday, trying to hit a squirrel."

"What business had you to be hittin' squirrels with a hoe? say!"

"But father wants to borrow yours."

"Why don't he have that mended? It's a great pester to have everybody usin' a body's things."

"Well, I can borrow one somewhere else, I suppose," says the suppliant. After the boy has stumbled across the ploughed ground and is fairly over the fence, Uncle Tim calls,

"Halloo, there, you little rascal! what are you goin' off without the hoe for?"

"I didn't know as you meant to lend it."

"I didn't say I wouldn't, did I? Here, come and take it—stay, I'll bring it; and do tell your

father not to be a lettin' you hunt squirrels with his hoes next time."

Uncle Tim's household consisted of Aunt Sally his wife, and an only son and daughter; the former, at the time our story begins, was at a neighbouring literary institution. Aunt Sally was precisely as clever, as easy to be entreated, and kindly in externals, as her helpmate was the reverse. She was one of those respectable, pleasant old ladies whom you might often have met on the way to church on a Sunday, equipped with a great fan and a psalm-book, and carrying some dried orange-peel or a stalk of fennel, to give to the children if they were sleepy in meeting. She was as cheerful and domestic as the teakettle that sung by her kitchen fire, and slipped along among Uncle Tim's angles and peculiarities as if there never was anything the matter in the world; and the same mantle of sunshine seemed to have fallen on Miss Grace, her only daughter.

Pretty in her person and pleasant in her ways, endowed with native self-possession and address, lively and chatty, having a mind and a will of her own, yet good-humoured withal, Miss Grace was a universal favourite. It would have puzzled a city

lady to understand how Grace, who never was out of Newbury in her life, knew the way to speak, and act, and behave, on all occasions, exactly as if she had been taught how. She was just one of those wild flowers which you may sometimes see waving its little head in the woods, and looking so civilized and garden-like, that you wonder if it really did come up and grow there by nature. She was an adept in all household concerns, and there was something amazingly pretty in her energetic way of bustling about, and "putting things to rights." Like many other damsels, she had a longing after the tree of knowledge, and, having exhausted the literary fountains of a district school, she fell to reading whatsoever came in her way. True, she had but little to read; but what she perused she had her own thoughts upon, so that a person of information, in talking with her, would feel a constant wondering pleasure to find that she had so much more to say of this, that, and the other thing than he expected.

Uncle Tim, like every one else, felt the magical brightness of his daughter, and was delighted with her praises, as might be discerned by his often *finding occasion to* remark, that "he didn't see why

the boys need to be all the time a' comin' to see Grace, for she was nothing so extror'nary, after all." About all matters and things at home she generally had her own way, while Uncle Tim would scold and give up with a regular good grace that was quite creditable.

"Father," says Grace, "I want to have a party next week."

"You sha'nt go to havin' your parties, Grace. I always have to eat bits and ends a fortnight after you have one, and I won't have it so." And so Uncle Tim walked out, and Aunt Sally and Miss Grace proceeded to make the cake and pies for the party.

When Uncle Tim came home, he saw a long array of pies and rows of cakes on the kitchen table.

"Grace—Grace—Grace, I say! What is all this here flummery for?"

"Why, it is *to eat*, father," said Grace, with a good-natured look of consciousness.

Uncle Tim tried his best to look sour; but his visage began to wax comical as he looked at his merry daughter, so he said nothing, but quietly sat down to his dinner.

"Father," said Grace, after dinner, "we shall want two more candlesticks next week."

"Why! can't you have your party with what you've got?"

"No, father, we want two more."

"I can't afford it, Grace—there's no sort of use on't—and you sha'n't have any."

"Oh, father, now do," said Grace.

"I won't, neither," said Uncle Tim, as he sallied out of the house, and took the road to Robert Morris's store.

In half-an-hour he returned again, and fumbling in his pocket, and drawing forth a candlestick, levelled it at Grace.

"There's your candlestick."

"But, father, I said I wanted *two*."

"Why! can't you make one do?"

"No, I can't; I must have two."

"Well, then, there's t'other; and here's a fol-de-rol for you to tie round your neck." So saying, he bolted for the door, and took himself off with all speed. It was much after this fashion that matters commonly went on in the brown house.

But, having tarried long on the way, we must *proceed with the* main story.

James thought Miss Grace was a glorious girl, and as to what Miss Grace thought of Master James, perhaps it would not have been developed, had she not been called to stand on the defensive for him with Uncle Tim. For, from the time that the whole village of Newbury began to be wholly given unto the praise of Master James, Uncle Tim set his face as a flint against him, from the laudable fear of following the multitude. He therefore made conscience of stoutly gainsaying everything that was said in his favour, which, as James was in high favour with Aunt Sally, he had frequent opportunities to do.

So, when Miss Grace perceived that Uncle Tim did not like our hero as much as he ought to do, she, of course, was bound to like him well enough to make up for it. Certain it is that they were remarkably happy in finding opportunities of being acquainted; that James waited on her, as a matter of course, from singing-school; that he volunteered making a new box for her geranium on an improved plan; and, above all, that he was remarkably particular in his attentions to Aunt Sally, a stroke of policy which showed that James had a natural genius for this sort of matters. James had a fine,

and was particularly fond of it, because he had learned to play on it by intuition; and on the decease of the old pitchpipe, which was slain by a fall from the gallery, he took the liberty to introduce the flute in its place. For this and other sins, and for the good reasons above named, Uncle Tim's countenance was not towards James, neither could he be moved to him-ward by any manner of means.

To all Aunt Sally's good words and kind speeches, he had only to say that "he didn't like him; that he hated to see him a' manifesting and glorifying there in the front gallery Sundays, and a' acting everywhere as if he was master of all; he didn't like it, and he wouldn't." But our hero was no whit cast down or discomfited by the mal content aspect of Uncle Tim.

"Why, James," said his companion and chief counsellor, "do you think Grace likes you?"

"I don't know," said our hero, with a comfortable appearance of certainty.

"But you can't get her, James, if Uncle Tim is cross about it."

"Fudge! I can make Uncle Tim like me, if I have a mind to try."

"Well, then, Jim, you'll have to give up that flute of yours, I tell you, now."

"Faw, sol, law—I can make him like me, and my flute too."

"Why, how will you do it?"

"Oh, I'll work it," said our hero.

"Well, Jim, I tell you, now, you don't know Uncle Tim if you say so."

"I *do* know Uncle Tim, though, better than most folks; he is no more cross than I am; you have nothing to do but make him think he is in his own way when he is in yours—that is all."

"Well," said the other, "but, you see, I don't believe it."

"And I'll bet you a gray squirrel that I'll go there this very evening, and get him to like me and my flute both," said James.

Accordingly, the late sunshine of that afternoon shone full on the yellow buttons of James as he proceeded to the place of conflict. It was a bright, beautiful evening. A thunder-storm had just cleared away, and the silver clouds lay rolled up in masses around the setting sun; the rain-drops were sparkling and winking to each other over the ends of the leaves. and all the bluebirds and robins.

breaking forth into song, made the little green valley as merry as a musical box.

James's soul was always overflowing with that kind of poetry which consists in feeling unspeakably happy; and it is not to be wondered at, considering where he was going, that he should feel in a double ecstacy on the present occasion. He stepped gaily along, occasionally springing over a fence to the right, to see whether the rain had swollen the trout-brook, or to the left, to notice the ripening of Mr. Somebody's watermelons—for James always had an eye on all his neighbours' matters as well as his own.

In this way he proceeded till he arrived at the picket-fence that marked the commencement of Uncle Tim's ground. Here he stopped to consider. Just then, four or five sheep walked up, and began also to consider a loose picket, which was hanging just ready to drop off; and James began to look at the sheep. "Well, mister," said he, as he observed the leader judiciously drawing himself through the gap, "in with you—just what I wanted;" and, having waited a moment, to ascertain that all the company were likely to follow, he ran with all haste towards the house, and swing-

ing open the gate, pressed all breathless to the door.

"Uncle Tim, there are four or five sheep in your garden." Uncle Tim dropped his whetstone and scythe.

"I'll drive them out," said our hero; and with that, he ran down the garden alley, and made a furious descent on the enemy; bestirring himself, as Bunyan says, "lustily and with good courage," till every sheep had skipped out much quicker than it skipped in; and then springing over the fence, he seized a great stone, and nailed on the picket so effectually that no sheep could possibly encourage the hope of getting in again. This was all the work of a minute; and he was back again, but so exceedingly out of breath that it was necessary for him to stop a moment and rest himself. Uncle Tim looked ungraciously satisfied.

"What under the canopy set you to scampering so?" said he; "I could a' driv' out them critturs myself!"

"If you are at all particular about driving them out *yourself*, I can let them in again," said James.

Uncle Tim looked at him with an odd sort of twinkle in the corner of his eye.

"'Spose I must ask you to walk in," said he.

"Much obliged," said James, "but I am in a great hurry." So saying, he started in very business-like fashion towards the gate.

"You'd better just stop a minute."

"Can't stay a minute."

"I don't see what possesses you to be all the while in sich a hurry; a body would think you had all creation on your shoulders!"

"Just my situation, Uncle Tim," said James, swinging open the gate.

"Well, at any rate, have a drink of cider, can't ye?" said uncle Tim, who was now quite engaged to have his own way in the case.

James found it convenient to accept this invitation, and Uncle Tim was twice as good-natured as if he had stayed in the first of the matter.

Once fairly forced into the premises, James thought fit to forget his long walk and excess of buisness, especially as about that moment Aunt Sally and Miss Grace returned from an afternoon call. You may be sure that the last thing these respectable ladies looked for was to find Uncle Tim and Master James tête-à-tête over a pitcher of *cider; and when,* as they entered, our hero looked

up with something of a mischievous air, Miss Grace, in particular, was so puzzled that it took her at least a quarter of an hour to untie her bonnet strings. But James stayed and acted the agreeable to perfection. First he must needs go down into the garden to look at Uncle Tim's wonderful cabbages, and then he promenaded all around the corn-patch, stopping every few moments and looking up with an appearance of great gratification, as if he had never seen such corn in his life; and then he examined Uncle Tim's favourite apple-tree with an expression of wonderful interest.

"I never!" he broke forth, having stationed himself against the fence opposite it; "what kind of an apple-tree is that?"

"It's a bell-flower, or somethin' another," said Uncle Tim.

"Why, where *did* you get it? I never saw such apples!" said our hero, with his eyes still fixed on the tree.

Uncle Tim pulled up a stalk or two of weeds and threw them over the fence, just to show that he did not care anything about the matter, and then he came up and stood by James.

"Nothin' so remarkable, as I know on," said he.

Just then, Grace came to say that supper was ready. Once seated at a table, it was astonishing to see the perfect and smiling assurance with which our hero continued his addresses to Uncle Tim. It sometimes goes a great way towards making people like us, to take it for granted that they do already, and upon this principle James proceeded. He talked, laughed, told stories, and joked with the most fearless assurance, occasionally seconding his words by looking Uncle Tim in the face with a countenance so full of good-will as would have melted any snow-drift of prejudices in the world.

James also had one natural accomplishment, more courtier-like than all the diplomacy in Europe, and that was, the gift of feeling a *real* interest for anybody in five minutes; so that if he began to please in jest, he generally ended in earnest. With great simplicity of mind, he had a natural tact for seeing into others, and watched their motions with the same delight with which a child gazes at the wheels and springs of a watch, to "see what it will do."

The rough exterior and latent kindness of Uncle Tim were quite a spirit-stirring study; and when

tea was over, as he and Grace *happened* to be standing together in the front door, he broke forth,

"I do really like your father, Grace!"

"Do you?" said Grace!

"Yes, I do. He has something *in him*, and I like him all the better for having to fish it out."

"Well, I hope you will make him like you," said Grace, unconsciously; and then she stopped, and looked a little abashed.

James was too well bred to see this, or look as if Grace meant any more than she said—a kind of breeding not always attendant on more *fashionable* polish—so he only answered,

"I think I shall, Grace! though I doubt whether I can get him to own it."

"He is the kindest man that ever was," said Grace; "and he always acts as if he was ashamed of it."

James turned a little away, and looked at the bright evening sky, which was glowing like a calm golden sea; and over it was the silver new moon, with one little star to hold the candle for her. He shook some bright drops off from a rosebush near by, and watched to see them shine as they fell.

while Grace stood very quietly waiting for him to speak again.

"Grace," said he, at last, "I am going to college this autumn."

"So you told me yesterday," said Grace.

James stooped down over Grace's geranium, and began to busy himself with pulling off all the dead leaves, remarking in the mean while,

"And if I do get *him* to like me, Grace, will you like me too?"

"I like you now very well," said Grace.

"Come, Grace, you know what I mean," said James, looking steadfastly at the top of the apple-tree

"Well, I wish then you would understand what I mean, without my saying any more about it," said Grace.

"Oh! to be sure I will," said our hero, looking up with a very intelligent air; and so, as Aunt Sally would say, the matter was settled, with "no words about it."

Now shall we narrate how our hero, as he saw Uncle Tim approaching the door, had the impudence to take out his flute, and put the parts together, screwing it round and fixing it with great *composure?*

"Uncle Tim," said he, looking up, "this is the best flute that ever I saw."

"I hate them tooting critturs," said Uncle Tim, snappishly.

"I declare! I wonder how you can!" said James, "for I do think they exceed—"

So saying, he put the flute to his mouth, and ran up and down a long flourish.

"There! what think you of that?" said he, looking in Uncle Tim's face with much delight.

Uncle Tim turned and marched into the house, but soon faced to the right-about and came out again, for James was fingering "Yankee Doodle"—that appropriate national air for the descendants of the Puritans.

Uncle Tim's patriotism began to bestir itself; and now, if it had been anything, as he said, but "that 'ere flute"—as it was, he looked more than once at James's fingers.

"How under the sun *could* you learn to do that?" said he.

"Oh, its easy enough," said James, proceeding with another tune; and, having played it through, he stopped a moment to examine the joints of his flute, and in the mean time addressed Uncle Tim.

"Yes can't think how grand this is for pitching tunes—I always pitch the tunes Sunday with it."

"Yes, but I don't think it's a right and fit instrument for the Lord's house," said Uncle Tim.

"Why not? It is only a kind of a long pitch-pipe, you see," said James; "and, seeing the old one is broken, and this will answer, I don't see why it is not better than nothing."

"Why, yes, it may be better than nothing," said Uncle Tim; "but, as I always tell Grace and my wife, it 'aint the right kind of instrument, after all; it 'aint solemn."

"Solemn!" said James; "that is according as you use it: see here, now."

So saying, he struck up Old Hundred, and proceeded through it with great perseverance.

"There, now!" said he.

"Well, well, I don't know but it is," said Uncle Tim; "but as I said at first, I don't like the look of it in meetin'."

"But yet you really think it is better than nothing," said James, "for you see I could'nt pitch my tunes without it."

"Maybe 'tis," said Uncle Tim; "but that isn't *sayin'* much."

This, however, was enough for Master James, who soon after departed, with his flute in his pocket, and Grace's last words in his heart; soliloquizing as he shut the gate, "There, now, I hope Aunt Sally won't go to praising me; for, just so sure as she does, I shall have it all to do over again."

James was right in his apprehension. Uncle Tim could be privately converted, but not brought to open confession; and when, the next morning, Aunt Sally remarked, in the kindness of her heart,

"Well, I always knew you would come to like James," Uncle Tim only responded, "Who said I did like him?"

"But I'm sure you *seemed* to like him last night."

"Why, I couldn't turn him out o' doors, could I? I don't think nothin' of him but what I always did."

But it was to be remarked that Uncle Tim contented himself at this time with the mere general avowal, without running it into particulars, as was formerly his wont. It was evident that the ice had begun to melt, but it might have been a long time in dissolving, had not collateral incidents assisted.

It so happened that, about this time, George Griswold, the only son before referred to, returned to his native village, after having completed his theological studies at a neighbouring institution. It is interesting to mark the gradual development of mind and heart, from the time that the white-headed, bashful boy quits the country village for college, to the period when he returns, a formed and matured man, to notice how gradually the rust of early prejudices begins to cleave from him—how his opinions, like his handwriting, pass from the cramped and limited forms of a country school into that confirmed and characteristic style which is to mark the man for life. In George this change was remarkably striking. He was endowed by nature with uncommon acuteness of feeling and fondness for reflection: qualities as likely as any to render a child backward and uninteresting in early life.

When he left Newbury for college, he was a taciturn and apparently phlegmatic boy, only evincing sensibility by blushing, and looking particularly stupified whenever anybody spoke to him. Vacation after vacation passed, and he returned *more and more* an altered being; and he who once

shrunk from the eye of the deacon, and was ready to sink if he met the minister, now moved about among the dignitaries of the place with all the composure of a superior being.

It was only to be regretted that, while the mind improved, the physical energies declined, and that every visit to his home found him paler, thinner, and less prepared in body for the sacred profession to which he had devoted himself. But now he was returned, a minister—a real minister, with a right to stand in the pulpit and preach; and what a joy and glory to Aunt Sally—and to Uncle Tim, if he were not ashamed to own it.

The first Sunday after he came, it was known far and near that George Griswold was to preach; and never was a more ready and expectant audience.

As the time for reading the first psalm approached, you might see the white-headed men turning their faces attentively towards the pulpit; the anxious and expectant old women, with their little black bonnets, bent forward to see him rise. There were the children looking, because everybody else looked; there was Uncle Tim in the front pew, his face considerately adjusted; there was Aunt

Sally, seeming as pleased as a mother could seem; and Miss Grace, lifting her sweet face to her brother, like a flower to the sun; there was our friend James in the front gallery, his joyous countenance a little touched with sobriety and expectation: in short, a more embarrassingly attentive audience never greeted the first effort of a young minister. Under these circumstances, there was something touching in the fervent self-forgetfulness which characterized the first exercises of this morning—something which moved every one in the house.

The devout poetry of his prayer, rich with the orientalism of Scripture, and eloquent with the expression of strong yet chastened emotion, breathed over his audience like music, hushing every one to silence, and beguiling every one to feeling. In the sermon there was the strong intellectual nerve, the constant occurrence of argument and statement, which distinguishes a New-England discourse; but it was touched with life by the intense, yet half-subdued feeling with which he seemed to utter it.

When the services were over, the congregation *dispersed* with the air of people who had *felt* rather

than *heard;* and all the criticism that followed was similar to that of old Deacon Hart—an upright, shrewd man—who, as he lingered a moment at the church door, turned and gazed with unwonted feeling at the young preacher.

He's a blessed cre'tur!" said he, the tears actually making their way to his eyes; "I han't been so near heaven this many a day. He's a blessed cre'tur of the Lord—that's my mind about him!"

As for our friend James, he was at first sobered, then deeply moved, and at last wholly absorbed by the discourse; and it was only when meeting was over that he began to think where he really was.

With all his versatile activity, James had a greater depth of mental capacity than he was himself aware of, and he began to feel a sort of electric affinity for the mind that had touched him in a way so new; and when he saw the mild minister standing at the foot of the pulpit stairs, he made directly towards him.

"I do want to hear more from you," said he, with a face full of earnestness; "may I walk home with you?"

"It is a long and warm walk," said the young minister, smiling.

"Oh, I don't care for that, if it does not trouble *you*," said James; and leave being gained, you might have seen them slowly passing along under the trees, James pouring forth all the floods of inquiry which the sudden impulse of his mind had brought out, and supplying his guide with more questions and problems for solution than he could have gone through with in a month.

"I cannot answer all your questions now," said he, as they stopped at Uncle Tim's gate.

"Well, then, when will you?" said James, eagerly. "Let me come home with you to-night?"

The minister smiled assent, and James departed so full of new thoughts, that he passed Grace without even seeing her. From that time a friendship commenced between the two, which was a beautiful illustration of the affinities of opposites. It was like a friendship between morning and evening—all freshness and sunshine on one side, and all gentleness and peace on the other.

The young minister, worn by long-continued ill health, by the fervency of his own feelings, and the gravity of his own reasonings, found pleasure

in the healthful buoyancy of a youthful, unexhausted mind, while James felt himself sobered and made better by the moonlight tranquility of his friend. It is one mark of a superior mind to understand and be influenced by the superiority of others, and this was the case with James. The ascendency which his new friend acquired over him was unlimited and did more in a month towards consolidating and developing his character, than all the four years course of a college. Our religious habits are likely always to retain the impression of the first seal which stamped them, and in this case it was a peculiarly happy one. The calmness, the settled purpose, the mild devotion of his friend, formed a just alloy to the energetic and reckless buoyancy of James' character, and awakened in him a set of feelings without which the most vigorous mind must be incomplete.

The effect of the ministrations of the young pastor, in awaking attention to the subjects of his calling in the village, was marked, and of a kind which brought pleasure to his own heart. But, like all other excitement, it tends to exhaustion, and it was not long before he sensibly felt the decline of the powers of life. To the best regulated mind

there is something bitter in the relinquishment of projects for which we have been long and laboriously preparing, and there is something far more bitter in crossing the long-cherished expectations of friends. All this George felt. He could not bear to look on his mother, hanging on his words and following his steps with eyes of almost childish delight—on his singular father, whose whole earthly ambition was bound up in his success, and think how soon the "candle of their old age" must be put out. When he returned from a successful effort it was painful to see the old man, so evidently delighted, and yet so anxious to conceal his triumph.

If George was engaged in argument with any one else, he would sit by, with his head bowed down, looking out from under his shaggy eyebrows with a shamefaced satisfaction very unusual with him. Expressions of affection from the naturally gentle are not half so touching as those which are forced out from the hard-favoured and severe; and George was affected, even to pain, by the evident pride and regard of his father.

"He never said so much to anybody before," thought he, "and what will he do if I die?"

In such thoughts as these Grace found her

brother engaged one still autumn morning, as he stood leaning against the garden fence.

"What are you solemnizing here for, this bright day, brother George?" said she, as she bounded down the alley.

The young man turned and looked on her happy face with a sort of twilight smile.

"How *happy* you are, Grace!"

"To be sure I am! and you ought to be too, because you are better."

"I am happy, Grace—that is, I hope I shall be."

"You are sick, I know you are," said Grace; "you look worn out! Oh, I wish your heart could *spring* once, as mine does."

"I am not well, dear Grace, and I fear I never shall be," said he, turning away, and fixing his eyes on the fading trees opposite.

"Oh, George! dear George! don't, don't say *that;* you'll break all our hearts," said Grace, with tears in her own eyes.

"Yes, but it is *true*, sister: I do not feel it on my own account so much as—However," he added, "it will all be the same in heaven."

It was but a week after this that a violent cold hastened the progress of debility into a confirmed

malady. He sunk very fast. Aunt Sally, with the self-deceit of a fond and cheerful heart, thought every day that "he *would* be better," and Uncle Tim resisted conviction, with all the obstinate pertinacity of his character, while the sick man felt that he had not the heart to undeceive them.

James was now at the house every day, exhausting all his energy and invention in the case of his friend; and any one who had seen him in his hours of recklessness and glee, could scarcely recognise him as the being whose step was so careful, whose eye so watchful, whose voice and touch were so gentle, as he moved around the sick-bed. But the same quickness which makes a mind buoyant in gladness, often makes it gentlest and most sympathetic in sorrrow.

It was now nearly morning in the sick-room. George had been restless and feverish all night, but towards day he fell into a light slumber, and James sat by his side, almost holding his breath lest he should waken him. It was yet dusk, but the sky was brightening with a solemn glow, and the stars were beginning to disappear; all, save the bright and morning one, which, standing alone *in the* east, looked tenderly through the casement

like the eye of our heavenly Father, watching over us when all earthly friendships are fading.

George awoke with a placid expression of countentance, and fixing his eyes on the brightening sky, murmured faintly,

> "The sweet, immortal morning sheds
> Its blushes round the spheres."

A moment after, a shade passed over his face; he pressed his fingers over his eyes, and the tears dropped silently on his pillow.

"George! *dear* George!" said James, bending over him.

"It's my friends—it's my father—my mother," said he, faintly.

"Jesus Christ will watch over them," said James, soothingly.

"Oh, yes, I know he will; for *He* loved his own which were in the world; he loved them unto the end. But I am dying—and before I have done any good."

"Oh, do not say so," said James; "think, think what you have done, if only for *me!* God bless you for it! God *will* bless you for it; it will follow you to heaven; it will bring me there. Yes, I will do as you have taught me! I will give

my life, my soul, my whole strength to it; and then you will not have lived in vain."

George smiled and looked upward; "his face was as that of an angel;" and James, in his warmth continued:

"It is not *I* alone who can say this: we all bless you; every one in this place blesses you; you will be had in *everlasting* remembrance by some hearts here, I know."

"Bless *God!*" said George.

"We do," said James. "I bless him that I ever knew you; we all bless him, and we love you, and shall *forever*."

The glow that had kindled over the pale face of the invalid again faded as he said,

"But, James, I must, I ought to tell my father and mother; I ought to, and how can I?"

At that moment the door opened, and Uncle Tim made his appearance. He seemed struck with the paleness of George's face; and, coming to the side of the bed, he felt his pulse, and laid his hand anxiously on his forehead, and clearing his voice several times, inquired "if he didn't feel a little better."

"*No*, father," said George; then taking his hand,

he looked anxiously in his face, and seemed to hesitate a moment; "Father," he began, "you know that we ought to submit to God."

There was something in his expression at this moment which flashed the truth into the old man's mind; he dropped his son's hand with an exclamation of agony, and turning quickly, left the room.

"Father! father!" said Grace, trying to rouse him, as he stood with his arms folded by the kitchen window.

"Get away, child!" said he, roughly.

"Father, mother says breakfast is ready."

"I don't want any breakfast," said he, as he plunged out of the door and shut it after him.

It is well for man that the ways of God are not as his ways, and that he manifests his greatness not less in his mighty works, than in his condescension to the weakness of our fallen nature, and his long suffering forbearance with the provocations of our rebellious hearts. With all his singularities, however, there was in the heart of Uncle Tim a depth of religious feeling; but there are few indeed whose faith and resignation to the divine will can bear so keen a test as that under which his had thus appeared to fail.

In this hour of trial all the native obstinacy and pertinacity of the old man's character rose, and while he felt the necessity of submission, it seemed impossible to submit; and thus, reproaching himself, struggling in vain to repress the murmurs of nature, repulsing from him all external sympathy, his mind was "tempest-toss'd and not comforted."

It was on the still afternoon of the following Sabbath that he was sent for, in haste, to the chamber of his son. He entered, and saw that the hour was come. The family were all there; Grace and James, side by side, bent over the dying one, and his mother sat afar off, with her face hid in her apron, "that she might not see the death of the child." The aged minister was there, and the Bible lay open before him. The father walked to the side of the bed. He stood still, and gazed on the face now brightening with "life and immortality." The son lifted up his eyes: he saw his father, smiled, and put out his hand. "I am glad *you* are come," said he. "Oh, George, to the pity, don't! *don't* smile on me so! I know what is coming; I have tried and tried, and I *can't*, I *can't* have *it so;*" *and his* frame shook, and he sobbed audibly.

The room was still as death; there was none that seemed able to comfort him. At last the son repeated, in a sweet but interrupted voice, those words of man's best Friend: "Let not your heart be troubled; in my Father's house are many mansions."

"Yes, but I *can't help* being troubled; I suppose the Lord's will must be done, but it'll *kill* me."

"Oh, father, don't, don't break my heart," said the son, much agitated. "I shall see you again in heaven, and you shall see me again; and then 'your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.'"

"I never shall get to heaven, if I feel as I do now," said the old man. "I *cannot* have it so."

The mild face of the sufferer was overcast. "I wish he saw all that *I* do," said he, in a low voice; then looking towards the minister, he articulated, "Pray for us."

They knelt in prayer. It was soothing, as *real* prayer always must be; and when they rose, every one seemed more calm. But the sufferer was exhausted; his countenance changed; he looked on his friends; there was a faint whisper, "Peace I leave with you," and he was in heaven.

We need not dwell on what followed. The seed sown by the righteous often blossoms over their grave; and so was it with this good man: the words of peace which he spake unto his friends while he was yet with them, came into remembrance after he was gone; and though he was laid in the grave with many tears, yet it was with softened and submissive hearts.

"The Lord bless him!" said Uncle Tim, as he and James were standing, last of all, over the grave. "I believe my heart is gone to heaven with him; and I think the Lord really *did* know what was best, after all."

Our friend James seemed now to become the support of the family, and the bereaved old man unconsciously began to transfer to him the affections that had been left vacant.

"James," said he to him one day, "I suppose you know that you are about the same to me as a son."

"I hope so," said James, kindly.

"Well, well, you'll go to college next week, and none o' y'r keepin' school to get along. I've got enough to bring you safe out—that is, if you'll be *car'ful* and *stiddy*."

James knew the heart too well to refuse a favour in which the poor old man's mind was comforting itself; he had the self-command to abstain from any extraordinary expressions of gratitude, but took it kindly, as a matter of course.

"Dear Grace," said he to her, the last evening before he left home, "I am changed; we both are altered since we first knew each other; and now I am going to be gone a long time, but I am sure—'

He stopped to arrange his thoughts.

"Yes, you may be sure of all those things that you wish to say, and cannot," said Grace.

"Thank you," said James; then, looking thoughtfully, he added,

"God help me. I believe I have mind enough to be what I mean to; but whatever I am or have shall be given to God and my fellow-men; and then, Grace, your brother in heaven will rejoice over me."

"I believe he does *now*," said Grace. "God bless you, James; I don't know what would have become of us if you had not been here."

"Yes, you will live to be like him, and to do even more good," she added, her face brightening

as she spoke, till James thought she really must be right.

* * * * *

It was five years after this that James was spoken of as an eloquent and successful minister. Late one autumn evening, a tall, bony, hard-favoured man was observed making his way into the outskirts of the village of Farmington.

"Halloa, there!" he called to a man over the other side of a fence; "what town is this 'ere?"

"It's Farmington, sir."

"Well, I want to know if you know anything of a boy of mine that lives here?"

"A boy of yours—who?"

"Why, I've got a boy here, and I thought I'd jest look him up."

"And pray, what's his name?"

"Why," said the old man, pushing his hat off from his forehead, "I believe they call him James Benton! why, that is our minister's name."

"Oh, wal, I believe he *is* the minister come to think on't. He's a boy o' mine, though. Where does he live?"

"In that white house that you see set back from *the road there*, with all those trees round it."

At this instant a tall, manly-looking person approached from behind. Have we not seen that face before? It is a touch graver than of old, and its lines have a more thoughtful significance; but all the vivacity of James Benton sparkles in that quick smile as his eye falls on the old man.

"I *thought* you could not keep away from us long," said he, with the prompt cheerfulness of his boyhood, and laying hold of both of Uncle Tim's hard hands.

They approached the gate; a bright face glances past the window, and in a moment Grace is at the door.

"Father! *dear* father!"

"You'd *better* make believe be so glad," said Uncle Tim, his eyes glistening as he spoke.

"Come, come, father, I have authority in these days," said Grace, drawing him towards the house, "so no disrespectful speeches; away with yoor hat and coat, and sit down in this great chair."

"So, ho! Miss Grace," said Uncle Tim, "you are at your old tricks, ordering round as usual. Well, if I must, I must;" so down he sat.

"Father," said Grace, as he was leaving them, after a few days' stay, "it is thanksgiving-day next

month, and you and mother must come and stay with us."

Accordingly, the following month found Aunt Sally and Uncle Tim by the minister's fireside, delighted witnesses of the thanksgiving presents which a willing people were pouring in, and the next day they had once more the pleasure of seeing a son of theirs in the sacred desk, and hearing a sermon that everybody said was the "best he ever preached;" and it is to be remarked, by-the-by, that this was the standing commentary on all James's discourses, so that it was evident that he was "going on unto perfection."

"There's a great deal that's worth havin' in this 'ere life, after all," said Uncle Tim, as he sat musing over the coals of the bright evening fire of that day; "that is, if we'd only *take* it when the Lord lays it in our way."

"Yes," said James; "and let us only take it as *we should*, and this life will be cheerfulness, and the next fulness of joy."

SO MANY CALLS.

A SKETCH.

O ignorant poor man! what dost thou bear,
Locked up within the casket of thy breast?
What jewels, and what riches hast thou there?
What heavenly treasures in so weak a chest.

DAVIES.

It was a brisk clear evening in the latter part of December, when Mr. Aubrey returned from his counting-house to the comforts of a bright coal fire and warm arm-chair in his parlour at home. He changed his heavy boots for slippers, drew around him the folds of his evening gown, and then, lounging back in the chair, looked up to the ceiling and about with an air of satisfaction. Still there was a cloud on his brow: what could be the matter with Mr. Aubrey? To tell the truth, he had that afternoon received in his counting-room the agent of

one of the principal religious charities of the day, and had been warmly urged to double his last year's subscription, and the urging had been pressed by statements and arguments to which he did not know well how to reply. "People think, soliloquized he to himself, "that I am made of money, I believe; this is the fourth object this year for which I have been requested to double my subscription, and this year has been one of heavy family expenses—building and fitting up this house —carpets, curtains—no end to the new things to be bought—I really do not see how I am to give any thing more in charity; then there are the bills for the girls and the boys—they all say that they must have twice as much now as before we came into this house: wonder if I did right in building it?" And Mr. Aubrey glanced up and down the ceiling, and around on the costly furniture, and looked into the fire in silence. He was tired, harassed, and drowsy; his head began to swim, and his eyes closed—he was asleep. In his sleep he thought he heard a tap at the door; he opened it, and there stood a plain, poor-looking man, who, in a voice singularly low and sweet, asked for a few moments' *conversation* with him. Mr. Aubrey asked him into

the parlour, and drew him a chair near the fire. The stranger looked attentively around, and then, turning to Mr. Aubrey, presented him with a paper. "It is your last year's subscription to missions, said he; "you know all the wants of that cause that can be told you; I called to see if you had any thing more to add to it."

This was said in the same low and quiet voice as before; but, for some reason unaccountable to himself, Mr. Aubrey was more embarrassed by the plain, poor, unpretending man, than he had been in the presence of any one before. He was for some moments silent before he could reply at all, and then, in a hurried and embarrassed manner, he began the same excuses which had appeared so satisfactory to him the afternoon before—the hardness of the times, the difficulty of collecting money, family expenses, &c.

The stranger quietly surveyed the spacious apartment, with its many elegances and luxuries, and without any comment took from the merchant the paper he had given, but immediately presented him with another.

"This is your subscription to the Tract Society: have you anything to add to it; you know how

much it has been doing, and how much more it now desires to do, if Christians would only furnish means: do you not feel called upon to add something to it?"

Mr. Aubrey was very uneasy under this appeal, but there was something in the mild manner of the stranger that restrained him; but he answered that, although he regretted it exceedingly, his circumstances were such that he could not this year conveniently add to *any* of his charities.

The stranger received back the paper without any reply, but immediately presented in its place the subscription to the Bible Society, and in a few clear and forcible words, reminded him of its well-known claims, and again requested him to add something to his donations. Mr. Aubrey became impatient.

"Have I not said," he replied, "that I can do *nothing* more for any charity than I did last year? There seems to be no end to the calls upon us in these days. At first there were only three or four objects presented, and the sums required were moderate; now the objects increase every day; all call upon us for money, and all, after we give *once*, want us to double and treble our subscrip-

tions; there is no end to the thing; we may as well stop in one place as another."

The stranger took back the paper, rose, and, fixing his eye on his companion, said, in a voice that thrilled to his soul,

"One year ago to-night, you thought that your daughter lay dying; you could not sleep for agony; upon whom did you call all that night?"

The merchant started and looked up; there seemed a change to have passed over the whole form of his visiter, whose eye was fixed on him with a calm, intense, penetrating expression, that awed and subdued him; he drew back, covered his face, and made no reply.

"Five years ago," said the stranger, "when you lay at the brink of the grave, and thought that if you died then you should leave a family of helpless children entirely unprovided for, do you remember how you prayed? who saved you then?"

The stranger paused for an answer, but there was a dead silence. The merchant only bent forward as one entirely overcome, and rested his head on the seat before him.

The stranger drew yet nearer, and said, in a still

lower and more impressive tone, "Do you remember, fifteen years since, *that time* when you felt yourself so lost, so helpless, so hopeless; when you spent days and nights in prayer; when you thought you would give the whole world for one hours assurance that your sins were forgiven you?—who listened to you then?"

"It was my God and Saviour?" said the merchant, with a sudden burst of remorseful feeling; "oh, yes, it was he."

"And has *He* ever complained of being called on too often," inquired the stranger, in a voice of reproachful sweetness; "say," he added, "are you willing to begin this night, and ask no more of Him, if he, from this night, will ask no more from you?"

"Oh, never, never!" said the merchant, throwing himself at his feet; but, as he spake these words, the figure seemed to vanish, and he awoke with his whole soul stirred within him.

"Oh, my Saviour! what have I been saying? what have I been doing?" he exclaimed. "Take all, take everything! what is all that I have to what thou hast done for me!"

MARION JONES; OR, LOVE VERSUS LAW.

"Banish, oh! banish grief, and then
Our joys will bring our hopes again."

"Pains of love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are."

How many kinds of beauty there are! How many even in the human form! There is the bloom and motion of childhood, the freshness and ripe perfection of youth, the dignity of manhood, the softness of woman—all different, yet each in its kind perfect.

But there is none so peculiar, none that bears more the image of the heavenly, than the beauty of Christian old age. It is like the loveliness of those calm autumn days, when the heats of summer are past, when the harvest is gathered into the garner, and the sun shines over the placid fields

and fading woods, which stand waiting for their last change. It is a beauty more strictly moral, more belonging to the soul, than that of any other period of life. Poetic fiction always paints the old man as a Christian; nor is there any period where the virtues of Christianity seem to find a more harmonious development. The aged man, who has outlived the hurry of passion—who has withstood the urgency of temptation—who has concentrated the religious impulses of youth into habits of obedience and love—who, having served his generation by the will of God, now leans in helplessness on Him whom once he served, is, perhaps, one of the most faultless representations of the beauty of holiness that this world affords.

Thoughts something like these arose in my mind as I slowly turned my footsteps from the graveyard of my native village, where I had been wandering after years of absence. It was a lovely spot—a soft slope of ground close by a little stream, that ran sparkling through the cedars and junipers beyond it, while on the other side arose a green hill, with the white village laid like a necklace of pearls upon its bosom.

There is no feature of the landscape more pic-

turesque and peculiar than that of the graveyard —that "city of the silent," as it is beautifully expressed by the Orientals—standing amid the bloom and rejoicing of Nature, its white stones glittering in the sun, a memorial of decay, a link between the living and the dead.

As I moved slowly from mound to mound, and read the inscriptions, which purported that many a money-saving man, and many a busy, anxious housewife, and many a prattling, half-blossomed child, had done with care or mirth, I was struck with a plain slab, bearing the inscription, "To the memory of Howard Dudley, who died in his hundredth year." My eye was caught by this inscription, for in other years I had well known the person it recorded. At this instant, his mild and venerable form arose before me, and I recollect his quiet and lowly coming into meeting, precisely ten minutes before the time, every Sabbath—his tall form a little stooping—his best suit of butternut-coloured clothes, with long flaps and wide cuffs, on one of which two pins were always to be seen stuck in with the most reverent precision. When seated, the top of the pew came just to his chin, so that his silvery, placid head rose above it like

the moon above the horizon. His head was one that might have been sketched for a St. John—bald at the top, and around the temples adorned with a soft flow of bright fine hair,

> "That down his shoulders reverently spread,
> As hoary frost with spangles doth attire
> The naked branches of an oak half-dead.

He was then of great age, and every line of his patient face seemed to say, "And now, Lord, what wait I for?" Yet still, year after year, was he to be seen in the same place, with the same dutiful punctuality.

He was known far and near as a very proverb for peacefulness of demeanour and unbounded charitableness in covering and excusing the faults of others. As long as there was any doubt in a case of alleged evil-doing, he would say "the man did not mean any harm, after all;" and when transgression became too barefaced for this excuse, he always guessed "it was best not to say much about it; nobody could tell what *they* might be left to."

Some incidents in his life will show more clearly these traits. A certain shrewd landholder, by the name of Jones, who was not well reported of in *the matter of* honesty, sold to Mr. Dudley a valu-

able lot of land, and received the money for it; but, under various pretences, deferred giving the deed. Soon after, he died; and the deed was nowhere to be found, while this very lot of land was left by will to one of his daughters.

Old Mr. Dudley said "it was very extraor'nary: he always knew that Seth Jones was considerably sharp about money, but he did not think he would do such a downright wicked thing." So the old man repaired to Squire Abel to state the case and see if there was any redress. "I do not like to tell of it," said he; "but, Squire Abel, you know Mr. Jones was—was—*what he was*, even if he *is* dead and gone!" This was the nearest approach the old gentleman could make to specifying a heavy charge against the dead. On being told that the case admitted of no redress, he comforted himself with half soliloquizing, "Well, at any rate, the land has gone to those two girls, poor creatures —I hope it will do *them* some good. There is Silence—we won't say much about her; but Marion is a nice, pretty girl." And so the old man departed, leaving it as his opinion that, since the matter could not be mended, it was just as well not to say anything about it.

Now the two girls here mentioned (to wit, Silence and Marion) were the eldest and the youngest of a numerous family, the offspring of three wives of Seth Jones, of whom these two were the sole survivers. The elder, Silence, was a tall, strong, black-eyed, hard-featured girl, verging upon forty, with a good, loud, resolute voice, and what the Irishman would call "a dacent notion of using it." Why she was called *Silence* was a standing problem to the neighbourhood, for she had more faculty and inclination for making a noise than any person in the whole village. Miss Silence was one of those persons who have no disposition to yield any of their own rights. She marched up to all controverted matters, faced down all opposition, held her way lustily and with good courage, making men, women, and children turn out for her, as they would for a mailcoach. So evident was her innate determination to be free and independent, that, though she was the daughter of a rich man, and well portioned, only one swain was ever heard of who ventured to solicit her hand in marriage, and he was sent off with the assurance that, if he ever showed his face about the house again, she *would set* the dogs on him.

But Marion Jones was as different from her sister as the little graceful convolvulus from the great rough stick that supports it. At the time of which we speak she was just eighteen, a modest, slender, blushing girl, as timid and shrinking as her sister was bold and hardy. Indeed, the education of poor Marion had cost Miss Silence much painstaking and trouble, and, after all, she said "the girl would make a fool of herself; she never could teach her to be up and down with people, as she was."

When the report came to Miss Silence's ears that Mr. Dudley considered himself as aggrieved by her father's will, she held forth upon the subject with great strength of courage and of lungs. "Mr. Dudley might be in better business than in trying to cheat orphans out of their rights—she hoped he would go to law about it, and see what good he would get by it—a pretty church member and deacon, to be sure! getting up such a story about her poor father, dead and gone!"

"But," said Marion, "Mr. Dudley is a good man: I do not think he means to injure any one; there must be some mistake about it."

"Marion, you are a little fool, as I have always

told you," replied Silence; "you would be cheated out of your eye-teeth if you had not me to take care of you."

But subsequent events brought the affairs of these two damsels in closer connexion with those of Mr. Dudley, as we shall proceed to show.

It happened that the next-door neighbour of Mr. Dudley was a certain old farmer, whose crabbedness of demeanour had procured for him the name of *Uncle Jaw*. This agreeable surname accorded very well with the general characteristics both of the person and manner of its possessor. He was tall and hard-favoured, with an expression of countenance much resembling a north-east rainstorm—a drizzling, settled sulkiness, that seemed to defy all prospect of clearing off, and to take comfort in its own disagreeableness. His voice seemed to have taken lessons of his face, in such admirable keeping was its sawing, deliberate growl, with the pleasing physiognomy before indicated. By nature he was endowed with one of those active, acute, hair-splitting minds, which can raise forty questions for dispute on any point of the compass; and had he been an educated man, he *might have* proved as clever a metaphysician as

ever threw dust in the eyes of succeeding generations. But, being deprived of these advantages, he nevertheless exerted himself to quite as useful a purpose in puzzling and mystifying whomsoever came in his way. But his activity particularly exercised itself in the line of the law, as it was his meat, and drink, and daily meditation, either to find something to go to law about, or to go to law about something he had found. There was always some question about an old rail fence that used to run "*a leetle* more to the left hand," or that was built up "*a leetle* more to the right hand," and so cut off a strip of his "*medder land*," or else there was some outrage of Peter Somebody's turkeys, getting into his mowing, or Squire Moses's geese were to be shut up in the town pound, or something equally important kept him busy from year's end to year's end. Now, as a matter of private amusement, this might have answered very well; but then Uncle Jaw was not satisfied to fight his own battles, but must needs go from house to house; narrating the whole length and breadth of the case, with all the *says he's* and *says I's*, and the *I tell'd him's* and *he tell'd me's*, which do either accompany or flow therefrom. Moreover, he had

such a marvellous facility of finding out matters to quarrel about, and of letting every one else know where they, too, could muster a quarrel, that he generally succeeded in keeping the whole neighbourhood by the ears.

And as good Mr. Dudley assumed the office of peace-maker for the village, Uncle Jaw's efficiency rendered it no sinecure. He always followed the steps of Uncle Jaw, smoothing, hushing up, and putting matters aright with an assiduity that was truly wonderful.

Uncle Jaw himself had a great respect for the good man, and, in common with all the neighbourhood, sought unto him for counsel, though, like other seekers of advice, he appropriated only so much as seemed good in his own eyes.

Still he took a kind of pleasure in dropping in of an evening to Mr. Dudley's fireside, to recount the various matters which he had taken or was to take in hand.

But the grand "matter of matters," and the one that took up the most of Uncle Jaw's spare time, lay in a dispute between him and Squire Jones, the father of Marion and Silence; for it so happened that his lands and those of Uncle Jaw were

contiguous. Now the matter of dispute was on this wise: on Squire Jones's land there was a mill, which mill Uncle Jaw averred was "always a flooding his medder land." As Uncle Jaw's "medder land" was by nature half bog and bulrushes, and therefore liable to be found in a wet condition, there was always a happy obscurity where the water came from, and whether there was at any time more there than belonged to his share. So, when all other subject matters of dispute failed, Uncle Jaw recreated himself with getting up a lawsuit about his "medder land," and one of these cases was in pendency, when, by the death of the squire, the estate was left to Marion and Silence, his daughters. When, therefore, the report reached him that Mr. Dudley had been cheated out of his dues, Uncle Jaw prepared forthwith to go and compare notes. Therefore, one evening, as Mr. Dudley was sitting quietly by the fire, musing and reading with his big Bible open before him, he heard the premonitory symptoms of a visitation from Uncle Jaw on his door scraper, and soon the man made his appearance. After seating himself directly in front of the fire, with his elbows on his knees, and his hands spread out over the coals, he

looked up in Mr. Dudley's mild face with his little inquisitive gray eyes, and remarked, by way of opening the subject, "Well, well, old Squire Jones is gone at last. I wonder how much good all his land will do him now?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Dudley, "it just shows how all these things are not worth striving after. We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."

"Why, yes," replied Uncle Jaw, "that's all very right, but it was strange how that old Squire Jones did hang on to things. Now that mill of his, that was always soaking off water into these medders of mine, I took and tell'd Squire Jones just how it was, pretty nigh twenty times, and yet he would keep it just so; and now he's dead and gone, there is that old girl Silence is full as bad, and makes more noise; and she and Marion have got the land; but, you see, I mean to work it yet!"

Here Uncle Jaw paused to see whether he had produced any sympathetic excitement in Mr. Dudley; but the old man sat without the least emotion, quietly contemplating the top of the long kitchen shovel. Uncle Jaw fidgeted in his chair, and changed his mode of attack for one more

direct. "I heard 'em tell, Mr. Dudley, that the Squire served you something of an unhandy sort of trick about that 'ere lot of land."

Still Mr. Dudley made no reply; but Uncle Jaw's perseverance was not so to be put off, and he recommenced. "Squire Abel, you see, he tell'd me how the matter was, and he said he did not see as it could be mended; but I took and tell'd him, 'Squire Abel,' says I, 'I'd bet pretty nigh 'most anything, if Mr. Dudley would tell the matter to me, that I could find a hole for him to creep out at; for,' says I, 'I've seen daylight through more twistical cases than that afore now.'"

Still Mr. Dudley remained mute; and Uncle Jaw, after waiting a while, recommenced with, "But, railly, Mr. Dudley, I should like to hear the particulars!"

"I have made up my mind not to say anything more about that business," said Mr. Dudley, in a tone which, though mild, was so exceedingly definite, that Uncle Jaw felt that the case was hopeless in that quarter; he therefore betook himself to the statement of his own grievances.

"Why, you see," he began, at the same time taking the tongs, and picking up all the little

brands, and disposing them in the middle of the fire, "you see, two days after the funeral (for I didn't like to go any sooner), I stepped up to speak over the matter with old Silence; for as to Marion, she ha'n't no more to do with such things than our white kitten. Now, you see, Squire Jones, just afore he died, he took away an old rail fence of his that lay between his land and mine, and began to build a new stone wall, and when I come to measure, I found he had took and put almost the whole width of the stone wall on to my land, when there ought not to have been more than half of it come there. Now, you see, I could not say a word to Squire Jones, because, just before I found it out, he took ill and died; and so I thought I'd speak to old Silence, and see if she meant to do anything about it, 'cause I knew pretty well she wouldn't; and I tell you, if she didn't put it on me! we had a regular pitched battle—I thought she would have screamed herself to death! I don't know but she would, but just then poor Marion came in, and looked so frightened—Marion is a pretty girl, and looks so trembling and delicate, that it's a shame to plague her, and so I took and come away for that time."

Here Uncle Jaw perceived a brightening in the face of the good man, and felt exceedingly comforted that at last he was about to interest him in his story.

But all this while Mr. Dudley had been in a profound meditation concerning the ways and means of putting a stop to a quarrel that had been his torment from time immemorial, and just at this moment a plan had struck his mind which our story will proceed to unfold.

The mode of settling differences which had occurred to the good man was one which has been considered a specific in reconciling contending sovereigns and states from early antiquity, and he hoped it might have a pacifying influence even in so unpromising a case as that of Miss Silence and Uncle Jaw.

In former days, Mr. Dudley had kept the district school for several successive winters, and among his scholars was the gentle Marion Jones, then a plump, rosy little girl, with blue eyes, curly hair, and the sweetest disposition in the world. There was also little Joseph Adams, the only son of Uncle Jaw, a fine, healthy, robust boy, who used to spell the longest words, make the best snowballs

and poplar whistles, and read the loudest and fastest of any boy at school.

Little Joe inherited all his father's sharpness, with a double share of good-humour, so that, though he was forever effervescing in the way of one funny trick or another, he was a universal favourite, not only with Mr. Dudley, but with the whole school.

Master Joseph always took little Marion Jones under his especial protection, drew her to school on his sled, helped her out with all the long sums in her arithmetic, saw to it that nobody pillaged her dinner-basket or knocked down her bonnet, and resolutely whipped or snowballed any other boy who attempted the same gallantries. Years passed on, and Uncle Jaw had sent his son to college. He sent him because, as he said, he had "*a right* to send him; just as good a right as Squire Abel or anybody else to send their boys, and so he *would* send him." It was the remembrance of his old favourite Joseph, and his little pet Marion, that came across the mind of Mr. Dudley, and which seemed to open a gleam of light in regard to the future. So, when Uncle Jaw had finished his prelection, Mr. Dudley, after some meditation, *came out* with,

MARION JONES.

Master Joseph always took little Marion under his especial protection.

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"Well, they say that your son is going to have the valedictory in college."

Though somewhat startled at the abrupt transition, Uncle Jaw found the suggestion too flattering to his pride to be dropped; so, with a countenance grimly expressive of his satisfaction, he replied,

"Why yes—yes—I don't see no reason why a poor man's son ha'n't as much right as any one to be at the top, if he can get there."

"Just so," replied Mr. Dudley.

"He was always the boy for learning, and for nothing else," continued Uncle Jaw; "put him to farming, couldn't make nothing of him. If I set him to hoeing corn or hilling potatoes, I'd always find him stopping to chase hoptoads, or off after chip-squirrels. But set him down to a book, and there he was! That boy larnt reading the quickest of any boy that ever I saw: it wasn't a month after he began his *a b*, *abs*, before he could read in the 'Fox and the Brambles,' and in a month more he could clatter off his chapter in the Testament as fast as any of them; and you see, in college, it's just so—he has risen right up to be first."

"And he is coming home week after next," said Mr. Dudley, meditatively.

The next morning, as Mr. Dudley was eating his breakfast, he quietly remarked to his wife, "Sally, I believe it was week after next you were meaning to have your quilting?"

"Why, I never told you so: what makes you think that?"

"I thought that was your calculation," said the good man, quietly.

"Why no—to be sure, I *can* have it, and maybe it's the best of any time, if we can get Old Susan to come and help about the cakes and pies."

"I think you had better," replied Mr. Dudley, "and we will have all the young folks here."

And now let us pass over all the intermediate pounding, and grinding, and chopping, which for the next week foretold approaching festivity in the kitchen of Mr. Dudley. Let us forbear to provoke the appetite of a hungry reader by setting in order before him the minced pies, the cranberry tarts, the pumpkin pies, the dough-nuts, the cookies, and other sweet cakes of every description, that sprung into being at the magic touch of Old Susan, the village priestess on all these solemnities. Suffice it to say that the day had arrived, and the auspi*cious* quilt was spread.

The invitation had not failed to include the Misses Silence and Marion Jones—nay, good Mr. Dudley had pressed gallantry into the matter so far as to be the bearer of the message himself; for which he was duly rewarded by a broadside from Miss Silence, giving him what she termed a piece of her mind in the matter of the rights of widows and orphans; to all which the good old man listened with great benignity from the beginning to the end, and replied with,

"Well, well, Miss Silence, I expect you will think better of this before long; there had best not be any hard words about it." So saying, he took up his hat and walked off, while Miss Silence, who felt extremely relieved by having blown off steam, declared that "It was of no more use to hector old Mr. Dudley than to fire a gun at a bag of cotton-wool. For all that, though, she shouldn't go to the quilting; nor, more, should Marion."

"But, sister, why not?" said the little maiden; "I think I *shall* go." And Marion said this in a tone so mildly positive that Silence was amazed.

"What ails you, Marion?" said she, opening her eyes with astonishment: "haven't you any more

spirit than to go to there when he is doing all he can to ruin us?"

"I like Mr. Dudley," replied Marion; "he was always kind to me when I was a little girl, and I am not going to believe that he is a bad man now."

When a young lady states that she is not going to believe a thing, good judges of human nature generally give up the case; but Miss Silence, to whom the language of opposition and argument was entirely new, could scarcely give her ears credit for veracity in the case; she therefore repeated over exactly what she said before, only in a much louder tone of voice, and with much more vehement forms of asseveration: a mode of reasoning which, if not strictly logical, has at least the sanction of very respectable authorities among the enlightened and learned.

"Silence," replied Marion, when the storm had spent itself, "if it did not look like being angry with Mr. Dudley, I would stay away to oblige you; but it would seem to every one to be taking sides in a quarrel, and I never did, and never will, have any part or lot in such things."

"Then you'll just be trod and trampled on all your days," replied Silence; "but, however, if *you*

choose to make a fool of yourself, *I* don't;" and so saying, she flounced out of the room in great wrath. It so happened, however, that Miss Silence was one of those who have so little economy in disposing of a fit of anger, that it was all used up before the time of execution arrived. It followed, of consequence, that, having unburdened her mind freely both to Mr. Dudley and to Marion, she began to feel very much more comfortable and good-natured; and consequent upon that came divers reflections upon the many gossiping opportunities and comforts of a quilting; and then the intrusive little reflection, "What if she should go—after all, what harm would be done?" and then the inquiry, "Whether it was not her *duty* to go and look after Marion, poor child, who had no mother to watch over her?" In short, before the time of preparation arrived, Miss Silence had fully worked herself up to the magnanimous determination of going to the quilting. Accordingly, the next day, while Marion was standing before her mirror, braiding up her pretty hair, she was startled by the apparition of Miss Silence coming into the room as stiff as a changeable silk and a high horn comb could make her; and "grimly determined was her look"

"Well, Marion," said she, "if you *will* go to the quilting this afternoon, I think it is *my duty* to go and see to you."

What would people do if this convenient shelter of *duty* did not afford them a retreat in cases when they are disposed to change their minds? Marion suppressed the arch smile that, in spite of herself, laughed out at the corners of her eyes, and told her sister that she was much obliged to her for her care. So off they went together.

Silence in the mean time held forth largely on the importance of standing up for one's rights, and not letting one's self be trampled on.

The afternoon passed on, the elderly ladies quilted and talked scandal, and the younger ones discussed the merits of the various beaux who were expected to give vivacity to the evening entertainment. Among these, the newly-arrived Joseph Adams, just from college, with all his literary honours thick about him, became a prominet subject of conversation.

It was duly canvassed whether the young gentleman might be called handsome, and the affirmative was carried by a large majority, although *there* were some variations and exceptions; one of

the party declaring his whiskers to be in too high a state of cultivation, another maintaining that they were in the exact line of beauty, while a third vigorously disputed the point whether he wore whiskers at all. It was allowed by all, however, that he had been a great beau in the town where he had passed his college days. It was also inquired into whether he were matrimonially engaged; and the negative being understood, they diverted themselves with predicting to one another the capture of such a prize; each prophecy being received with such disclaimers as "Come now!" "Do be still!" "Hush your nonsense!" and the like.

At length the long-wished-for hour arrived, and one by one the lords of the creation began to make their appearance, and one of the last was this much-admired youth.

"That is Joe Adams!" "That is he!" was the busy whisper, as a tall, well-looking young man came into the room, with the easy air of one who had seen several things before, and was not to be abashed by the combined blaze of all the village beauties.

In truth, our friend Joseph had made the most of his residence in N——, paying his court no less

to the Graces than the Muses. His fine person, his frank, manly air, his ready conversation, and his faculty of universal adaptation, had made his society much coveted among the *beau monde* of N——, and though the place was small, he had become familiar with much good society.

We hardly know whether we may venture to tell our fair readers the whole truth in regard to our hero. We will merely hint, in the gentlest manner in the world, that Mr. Joseph Adams, being undeniably first in the classics and first in the drawing-room, having been gravely commended in his class by his venerable president, and gayly flattered in the drawing-room by the elegant Miss This and That, was rather inclining to the opinion that he was an uncommonly fine fellow, and even had the assurance to think that, under present circumstances, he could please without making any great effort; a thing which, however true it were in point of fact, is obviously improper to be thought of by a young man. Be that as it may, he moved about from one to another, shaking hands with all the old ladies, and listening with the greatest affability to the various comments on his growth and personal appearance, his points of resemblance to

his father, mother, grandfather, and grandmother, which are always detected by the superior acumen of elderly females.

Among the younger ones, he at once, and with full frankness, recognized old schoolmates, and partners in various wortleberry, chestnut, and strawberry excursions, and thus called out an abundant flow of conversation. Nevertheless, his eye wandered occasionally around the room, as if in search of something not there. What could it be? It kindled, however, with an expression of sudden brightness as he perceived the tall and spare figure of Miss Silence; whether owing to the personal fascinations of that lady, or to other causes, we leave the reader to determine.

Miss Silence had predetermined never to speak a word again to Uncle Jaw or any of his race; but she was taken by surprise at the frank, extended hand, and friendly "how d'ye do?" It was not in woman to resist so cordial an address from a handsome young man, and Miss Silence gave her hand and replied with a graciousness that amazed herself. At this moment, also, certain soft blue eyes peeped forth from a corner, just "to see if he looked as he used to do." Yes, there he was! the

same dark mirthful eyes that used to peer on her from behind the corners of the spelling-book at the district school; and Marion Jones gave a half sigh to those times, and then wondered why she happened to think of such nonsense.

"How is your sister, little Miss Marion?" said Joseph.

"Why, she is here—have you not seen her?" said Silence; "there she is, in that corner."

Joseph looked, but could scarcely recognize her. There stood a tall, slender, blooming girl, that might have been selected as a specimen of that union of perfect health with delicate fairness so characteristic of the young New-England beauty.

She was engaged in telling some merry story to a knot of young girls, and the rich colour that, like a bright spirit, constantly went and came in her cheeks; the dimples, quick and varying as those of a little brook; the clear, mild eye; the clustering curls, and, above all, the happy, rejoicing smile, and the transparent frankness and simplicity of expression which beamed like sunshine about her, all formed a combination of charms that took our hero quite by surprise; and when Silence, who had

a remarkable degree of directness in all her dealings, called out, "Here, Marion, is Joe Adams, inquiring after you!" our practised young gentleman felt himself colour to the roots of his hair, and for a moment he could scarce recollect that first rudiment of manners, "to make his bow like a good boy." Marion coloured also; but, perceiving the confusion of our hero, her countenance assumed an expression of mischievous drollery, which, helped on by the titter of her companions, added not a little to his confusion.

"What's the matter with me?" thought he, and calling up his courage, he dashed into the formidable circle of fair ones, and began chattering with one and another, calling by name with or without introduction, remembering things that never happened with a freedom that was perfectly fascinating.

"Really, how handsome he has grown!" thought Marion; and she coloured deeply when once or twice the dark eyes of our hero made the same observation with regard to herself, in that quick, intelligible dialect which eyes alone can speak. And when the little party dispersed, as they did very punctually at nine o'clock, our hero requested

of Miss Silence the honour of attending her home, an evidence of discriminating taste which materially raised him in the estimation of that lady. It was true, to be sure, that Marion walked on the other side of him, her little white hand just within his arm; and there was something in that light touch that puzzled him unaccountably, as might be inferred from the frequency with which Miss Silence was obliged to bring up the ends of conversation with "What did you say?" "What were you going to say?" and other persevering forms of inquiry, with which a regular-trained matter-of-fact talker will hunt down a poor fellow-mortal who is in danger of sinking into a comfortable revery.

When they parted at the gate, however, Silence gave our hero a hearty invitation to "come and see them any time," which he mentally regarded as more to the point than anything else that had been said.

As Joseph soberly retraced his way homeward, his thoughts, by some unaccountable association, began to revert to such topics as the loneliness of man by himself, the need of kindred spirits, the solaces of sympathy, and other like matters.

That night Joseph dreamed of trotting along

with his dinner-basket to the old brown school-house, and vainly endeavouring to overtake Marion Jones, whom he saw with her little sun-bonnet a few yards in front of him; then he was *tetering* with her on a long board, her bright little face glancing up and down, while every curl around it seemed to be living with delight; and then he was snowballing Tom Williams for knocking down Marion's doll's house or he sat by her on a bench, helping her out with a long sum in arithmetic; but, with the mischievous fatality of dreams, the more he ciphered and expounded, the longer and more hopeless grew the sum; and he awoke in the morning pshawing at his ill luck, after having done a sum over half a dozen of times, while Marion seemed to be looking on with the same air of arch-drollery that he saw on her face the evening before.

"Joseph," said Uncle Jaw, the next morning at breakfast, "I s'pose Squire Jones's daughters were not at the quilting?"

"Yes, sir, they were," said our hero; "they were both there."

"Why, you don't say so?"

"They certainly were," persisted the son.

"Well, I thought the old gal had too much spirit

for that: you see there is a quarrel between Mr. Dudley and those gals."

"Indeed!" said Joseph. "I thought the deacon never quarreled with anybody."

"But, you see, old Silence there, she will quarrel with *him:* raily, that creatur' is a tough one;" and Uncle Jaw leaned back in his chair, and contemplated the quarrelsome propensities of Miss Silence with the satisfaction of a kindred spirit. "But I'll fix her yet," he continued; "I see how to work it."

"Indeed, father, I did not know that you had anything to do with their affairs."

"Ha'n't I? I should like to know if I ha'n't!" replied Uncle Jaw, triumphantly. "Now see here, Joseph: you see I mean you shall be a lawyer: I'm pretty considerable of a lawyer myself—that is, for one not college larn't, and I'll tell you how it is"—and thereupon Uncle Jaw launched forth into the case of the medder land and the mill, and concluded with, "Now, Joseph, this 'ere is a whetstone for you to hone up your wits on."

In pursuance, therefore, of this plan of sharpening his wits in the manner aforesaid, our hero, after breakfast, went, like a dutiful son, directly towards

Squire Jones's, doubtless for the purpose of taking ocular survey of the meadow land, mill, and stone wall; but, by some unaccountable mistake, lost his way, and found himself standing before the door of Squire Jones's house.

The old 'squire had been among the aristocracy of the village, and his house had been the ultimate standard of comparison in all matters of style and garniture. Their big front room, instead of being strewn with lumps of sand, duly streaked over twice a-week, was resplendent with a carpet of red, yellow, and black stripes, while a towering pair of long-legged brass andirons, scoured to a silvery white, gave an air of magnificence to the chimney, which was materially increased by the tall brass-headed shovel and tongs, which, like a decorous, starched married couple, stood bolt upright in their places on either side. The sanctity of the place was still further maintained by keeping the window-shutters always closed, admitting only so much light as could come in by a round hole at the top of the shutter, and it was only on occasions of extraordinary magnificence that the room was thrown open to profane eyes.

Our hero was surprised, therefore, to find both

the doors and windows of this apartment open, and symptoms evident of its being in daily occupation. The furniture still retained its massive, clumsy stiffness, but there were various tokens that lighter fingers had been at work there since the notable days of good Dame Jones. There was a vase of flowers on the table, two or three books of poetry, and a little fairy work-basket, from which peeped forth the edges of some worked ruffling; there was a small writing-desk, and last, not least, in a lady's collection, an album, with leaves of every colour of the rainbow, containing inscriptions, in sundry strong masculine hands, "To Marion," indicating that other people had had their eyes open as well as Mr. Joseph Adams. "So," said he to himself, "this quiet little beauty has had admirers after all;" and consequent upon this came another question, (which was none of his concern, to be sure,) whether the little lady were or were not engaged; and from these speculations he was aroused by a light footstep, and anon the neat form of Marion made its appearance.

"Good-morning, Miss Jones," said he, bowing.

Now there is something very comical in the feeling when little boys and girls, who have always

known each other as plain Marion or Joseph, first meet as "Mr." or "Miss" So-and-So. Each one feels half disposed, half afraid, to return to the old familiar form, and awkwardly fettered by the recollection that they are no longer children. Both parties had felt this the evening before, when they met in company, but, now that they were alone together, the feeling became still stronger; and when Marion had requested Mr. Adams to take a chair, and Mr. Adams had inquired after Miss Marion's health, there ensued a pause, which, the longer it continued, seemed the more difficult to break, and during which Marion's pretty face slowly assumed an expression of the ludicrous, till she was as near laughing as propriety would admit; and Mr. Adams, having looked out at the window, and up at the mantelpiece, and down at the carpet, at last looked at Marion; their eyes met: the effect was electrical; they both smiled, and then laughed outright, after which the whole difficulty of conversation vanished.

"Marion," said Joseph, "do you remember the old school-house?"

"I thought that was what you were thinking of," said Marion; "but, really, you have grown and

altered so that I could hardly believe my eyes last night."

"Nor I mine," said Joseph, with a glance that gave a very complimentary turn to the expression.

Our readers may imagine that after this the conversation proceeded to grow increasingly confidential and interesting; that, from the account of early life, each proceeded to let the other know something of intervening history, in the course of which each discovered a number of new and admirable traits in the other, such things being matters of very common occurrence. In the course of the conversation, Joseph discovered that it was necessary that Marion should have two or three books then in his possession, and, as promptitude is a great matter in such cases, he promised to bring them "to-morrow."

For some time our young friends pursued their acquaintance, without a distinct consciousness of anything except that it was a very pleasant thing to be together. During the long, still afternoons, they rambled among the fading woods, now illuminated with the radiance of the dying year, and sentimentalized and quoted poetry; and almost

every evening Joseph found some errand to bring him to the house; a book for Miss Marion, or a bevy of roots and herbs for Miss Silence, or some remarkably fine yarn for her to knit; attentions which retained our hero in the good graces of the latter lady, and gained him the credit of being, "a young man that knew how to behave himself."

It cannot be supposed that all these things passed unnoticed by those wakeful eyes that are ever upon the motions of such "bright particular stars," and, as is usual in such cases, many things were known to a certainty which were not yet known to the parties themselves. The young belles and beaux whispered and tittered, and passed the original jokes and witticisms common in such cases, while the old ladies soberly took the matter in hand when they went out with their knitting to make afternoon visits, considering how much money Uncle Jaw had, how much his son would have, and how much Marion would have, and what all together would come to, and whether Joseph would be a "smart man," and Marion a good house-keeper, with all the "ifs, ands, and buts" of married life.

But the most fearful wonders and prognostics

crowded around the point "what Uncle Jaw would have to say to the matter." His lawsuit with the sisters being well understood, as there was every reason it should be, it was surmised what two such vigorous belligerents as himself and Miss Silence would say to the prospect of a matrimonial conjunction. It was also reported that Mr. Dudley had a claim to the land which constituted the finest part of Marion's portion, the loss of which would render the consent of Uncle Jaw still more doubtful. But all this while Miss Silence knew nothing of the matter, for her habit of considering and treating Marion as a child seemed to gain strength with time. Marion was always to be seen to, and watched, instructed, and taught; and Miss Silence could not conceive that one who could not even make pickles without her to oversee, could think of such a matter as setting up house-keeping herself. To be sure, she began to observe an extraordinary change in her sister; remarked that lately Marion seemed to be getting sort o' crazy-headed; that she seemed not to have any "faculty" for anything; that she had made ginger-bread twice, and forgot the ginger one time, and put in mustard the other; that she took the saltcellar

out in the table-cloth, and let the cat into the pantry half a dozen times; and that, when scolded for these sins of omission or commission, she had a fit of crying, and did a little worse than before. Silence was of opinion that Marion was getting to be "weakly and narvy," and actually concocted an unmerciful pitcher of wormwood and boneset, which she said was to keep off the "shaking weakness" that was coming over her. In vain poor Marion protested that she was well enough—Miss Silence *knew better;* and one evening she entertained Mr. Joseph Adams with a long statement of the case in all its bearings, and ended with demanding his opinion, as a candid listener, whether the wormwood and boneset sentence should not be executed.

Poor Marion had that very afternoon parted from a knot of young friends who had teased her most unmercifully on the score of attentions received, till she began to think the very leaves and stones were so many eyes to pry into her secret feelings, and then to have the whole case set in order before the very person, too, whom she most dreaded. "Certainly he would think she was acting like a fool; perhaps he did not mean any

thing more than friendship, *after all*, and she would not, for the world, have him suppose that she cared more for him than for any other *friend*, or that she was *in love*, of all things." So she sat very busy with her knitting-work, scarcely knowing what she was about, till Silence called out,

"Why, Marion, what a piece of work you are making of that stocking heel! What in the world are you doing to it?"

Marion dropped her knitting, and, making some pettish answer, escaped out of the room.

"Now, did you ever!" said Silence, laying down the seam she had been cross-stitching; "what *is* the matter with her, Mr. Adams?"

"Miss Marion is certainly indisposed," replied our hero gravely; "I must get her to take your advice, Miss Silence."

Our hero followed Marion to the front door, where she stood looking out at the moon, and begged to know what distressed her.

Of course it was "nothing," the young lady's usual complaint when in low spirits; and to show that she was perfectly easy, she began an unsparing attack on a white rose-bush near by.

"*Marion!*" said Joseph, laying his hand on hers,

and in a tone that made her start. She shook back her curls, and looked up to him with such an innocent, confiding face—

Ah, my good reader, you may go on with this part of the story for yourself. We are principled against unveiling the "sacred mysteries," the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," in such little moonlight interviews as these. You may fancy all that followed; and we can only assure all who are doubtful, that, under judicious management, cases of this kind may be disposed of without wormwood or boneset. Our hero and heroine were called to sublunary realities by the voice of Miss Silence, who came into the passage to see what upon earth they were doing. That lady was satisfied by the representations of so friendly and learned a young man as Joseph, that nothing immediately alarming was to be apprehended in the case of Marion, and she retired. From that evening Marion stepped about with a heart many pounds lighter than before.

"I'll tell you what, Joseph," said Uncle Jaw, "I'll tell you what, now, I hear 'em tell that you've took and courted that 'ere Marion Jones. Now I just want to know if it's true?"

There was an explicitness about this mode of inquiry that took our hero quite by surprise, so that he could only reply,

"Why, sir, supposing I had, would there be any objection to it in your mind?

"Don't talk to me," said Uncle Jaw; "I just want to know if it's true?"

Our hero put his hands in his pockets, walked to the window, and whistled.

"Cause if you have," said Uncle Jaw, "you may jest uncourt as fast as you can; for Squire Jones's daughter won't get a single penny of my money, I can tell you that."

"Why, father, Marion Jones is not to blame for anything that her father did, and I'm sure she is a pretty girl enough."

"I don't care if she is pretty; what's that to me? I've got you through college, Joseph, and a hard time I've had of it, a delving and slaving, and here you come, and the very first thing you do, you must take and court that 'ere Squire Jones's daughter, who was always putting himself up above me; besides, I mean to have the law on that estate yet, and Mr. Dudley, he will have the law too, and *it will* cut off the best piece of land the girl has; and

when you get married, I mean you shall *have* something. It's just a trick of them gals at me; but I guess I'll come up with 'em yet. I'm just a goin' down to have a 'regular hash' with old Silence, to let her know she can't come round me that way."

"Silence," said Marion, drawing her head into the window, and looking apprehensive, "there is Mr. Adams coming here.

"What, Joe Adams? Well, and what if he is?"

"No, no, sister, but it is his father—it is Uncle Jaw."

"Well, s'pose 'tis, child—what scares you? s'pose I'm afraid of him? If he wants more than I gave him last time, I'll put it on." So saying, Miss Silence took her knitting-work and marched down into the sitting-room, and sat herself bolt upright in an attitude of defiance, while poor Marion, feeling her heart beat unaccountably fast, glided out of the room.

"Well, good-morning, Miss Silence," said Uncle Jaw, after having scraped his feet on the scraper, and scrubbed them on the mat nearly ten minutes in silent deliberation.

"Morning, sir," said Silence, abbreviating the "good."

Uncle Jaw helped himself to a chair directly in front of the enemy, dropped his hat on the floor, and surveyed Miss Silence with a dogged air of satisfaction, like one who is sitting down to a regular, comfortable quarrel, and means to make the most of it.

Miss Silence tossed her head disdainfully, but scorned to commence hostilities.

"So, Miss Silence," said Uncle Jaw, deliberately, "you don't think you'll do anything about that 'ere matter."

"What matter?" said Silence, with an intonation resembling that of a roasted chestnut when it bursts from the fire.

"I railly thought, Miss Silence, in that 'ere talk I had with you about Squire Jones's cheatin' about that 'ere—"

"Mr. Adams," said Silence, "I tell you, to begin with, I'm not going to be sauced in this 'ere way by you. You ha'n't got common decency, nor common sense, nor common anything else, to talk so to me about my father: I won't bear it, I tell you."

"Why, Miss Jones," said Uncle Jaw, "how you talk! Well to be sure, Squire Jones is

dead and gone, and it's as well not to call it cheatin', as I was tellin' Mr. Dudley when he was talking about that 'ere lot—that 'ere lot, you know, that he sold him and never let him have the deed on't."

"That's a lie," said Silence, starting on her feet; "that's an up and down black lie! I tell you that, now, before you say another word."

"Miss Silence, railly, you seem to be getting touchy," said Uncle Jaw; "well, to be sure, if he can let that pass, other folks can, and may-be he will, because Squire Jones was a church-member, and Mr. Dudley is tender about bringing out anything against professors; but railly, now, Miss Silence, I didn't think you and Marion were going to work it so cunning in this here way."

"I don't know what you mean, and, what's more, I don't care," said Silence, resuming her work, and calling back the bolt, upright dignity with which she began.

There was a pause of some moments, during which the features of Silence worked with suppressed rage, which was contemplated by Uncle Jaw with undisguised satisfaction.

"You see, I s'pose, I shouldn't a minded your

Marion's setting out to court my Joe, if it hadn't a been for those things."

"Courting your son! Mr. Adams, I should like to know what you mean by that. I'm sure nobody wants your son, though he's a civil, likely fellow enough; yet with such an old dragon for a father, I'll warrant he won't get anybody to court him, nor be courted by him neither."

"Railly, Miss Silence, you a'n't hardly civil, now."

"Civil! I should like to know who *could* be civil? you know, now, as well as I do, that you are saying all this out of clear, sheer ugliness; and that's what you keep a doing all round the neighbourhood."

"Miss Silence," said Uncle Jaw, "I don't want no hard words with you. It's pretty much known round the neighbourhood that your Marion thinks she'll get my Joe, and I s'pose you was thinking that perhaps it would be the best way of settling up matters; but you see now, I took and tell'd my son I railly didn't see as I could afford it; I took and tell'd him that young folks must have something considerable to start with; and that, if Marion lost that 'ere piece of ground, as is likely she will,

it would be cutting off quite too much of a piece; so, you see, I don't want you to take no encouragement about that."

"Well, I think this is pretty well!" exclaimed Silence, provoked beyond measure or endurance; "you old torment! think I don't know what you're at? I and Marion courting your son? I wonder if you a'n't ashamed of yourself, now! I should like to know what I or she have done, now, to get that notion into your head?"

"I didn't s'pose you 'spected to get him yourself," said Uncle Jaw, "for I guess by this time you've pretty much gin up trying, ha'n't ye? But Marion does, I'm pretty sure."

"Here, Marion! Marion! you—come down!" called Miss Silence, in great wrath, throwing open the chamber door. "Mr. Adams wants to speak with you." Marion fluttering and agitated, slowly descended into the room, where she stopped, and looked hesitatingly, first at Uncle Jaw and then at her sister, who, without ceremony, proposed the subject-matter of the interview as follows:

"Now, Marion, here's this man pretends to say that you've been a courting and snaring to get his son, and I just want you to tell him that you ha'n't

never had no thought of him, and that you won't have, neither."

This considerate way of announcing the subject had the effect of bringing the burning colour into Marion's face, as she stood like a convicted culprit with her eyes bent on the floor.

Uncle Jaw, savage as he was, was always moved by female loveliness, as wild beasts are said to be mysteriously swayed by music, and looked on the beautiful, downcast face with more softening than Miss Silence, who, provoked that Marion did not immediately respond to the question, seized her by the arm and eagerly reiterated,

"Marion! why don't you speak, child?"

Gathering desperate courage, Marion shook off the hand of Silence, and straightened herself up with as much dignity as some little flower lifts up its head when it has been bent down by raindrops.

"Silence," she said, "I never would have come down if I had thought it was to hear such things as this. Mr. Adams, all I have to say to you is, that your son has sought me, and not I your son. If you wish to know any more, he can tell you better than I."

"Well, I vow! she is a pretty girl," said Uncle Jaw, as Marion shut the door.

This exclamation was involuntary; then recollecting himself, he picked up his hat, and saying, "Well, I guess I may as well get along," he began to depart; but, turning round before he shut the door, he said, "Miss Silence, if you should conclude to do anything about that 'ere fence, just send word over and let me know."

Silence, without deigning any reply, marched up into Marion's little chamber, where our heroine was treating resolution to a good fit of crying.

"Marion, I did not think you had been such a fool," said the lady. "I do want to know, now, if you've railly been thinking of getting married, and to that Joe Adams of all folks!"

Poor Marion! such an interlude in all her pretty romantic little dreams about kindred feelings and a hundred other delightful ideas, that flutter like singing-birds through the fairy-land of first love. Such an interlude! to be called on by gruff human voices to give up all the cherished secrets that she had trembled to whisper even to herself. She felt as if love itself had been defiled by the coarse, rough hands that had been meddling with it: so to her

sister's soothing address Marion made no answer, only to cry and sob still more bitterly than before.

Miss Silence, if she had a great stout heart, had no less a kind one, and seeing Marion take the matter so bitterly to heart, she began gradually to subside.

"Marion, you poor little fool, you," said she, at the same time giving her a hearty slap, as expressive of earnest sympathy, "I really do feel for you; that good-for-nothing fellow has been a cheatin' you, I do believe."

"Oh, don't talk any more about it, for mercy's sake," said Marion; "I am sick of the whole of it."

"That's you Marion! Glad to hear you say so! I'll stand up for you, Marion; if I catch Joe Adams coming here again with his palavering face, I'll let him know!"

"No! no! don't, for mercy's sake, say anything to Mr. Adams—don't!"

"Well, at any rate, I'll just let Joe Adams know that we ha'n't nothing more to say to him."

"But I don't wish to say that—that is—I don't know—indeed, sister Silence, don't say anything about it."

"Why not? You a'n't such a *natural*, now, as to want to marry him after all, hey?"

"I don't know what I want nor what I don't want; only, Silence, do now, if you love me, do promise not to say anything at all to Mr. Adams —don't."

"Well, then, I won't," said Silence; "but, Marion, if you railly was in love all this while, why ha'n't you been and told me? Don't you know that I'm as much as a mother to you, and you ought to have told me in the beginning?"

"I don't know, Silence! I couldn't—I don't want to talk about it."

"Well, Marion, you a'n't a 'bit like me," said Silence; a remark evincing great discrimination, certainly, and with which the conversation terminated.

That very evening our friend Joseph walked down towards the dwelling of the sisters, not without some anxiety for the result, for he knew by his father's satisfied appearance that war had been declared. He walked into the family room, and found nobody there but Miss Silence, who was sitting, grim as an Egyptian sphinx, stitching very vigorously on a meal-bag, in which interesting employ-

ment she thought proper to be so much engaged as not to remark the entrance of our hero. To Joseph's accustomed "Good-evening, Miss Silence," she replied merely by looking up with a cold nod, and went on with her sewing. It appeared that she had determined on a literal version of her promise not to say anything to Mr. Adams.

Our hero, as we have before stated, was familiar with the crooks and turns of the female mind, and mentally resolved to put a bold face on the matter, and give Miss Silence no encouragement in her attempt to make him feel himself unwelcome. It was rather a frosty autumnal evening, and the fire on the hearth was decaying. Mr. Joseph bustled about most energetically, throwing down the tongs, and shovel, and bellows, while he pulled the fire to pieces, raked out ashes and brands, and then in a twinkling, was at the woodpile, from whence he selected a massive backlog and forestick, with accompaniments, which were soon roaring and crackling in the chimney.

"There, now, that does look something like comfort," said our hero; and drawing forward the big rocking-chair, he seated himself in it, and rubbed *his* hands with an air of great complacency. Miss

Silence looked not up, but stitched so much the faster that one might distinctly hear the crack of the needle and the whistle of the thread all over the apartment.

"Have you a headache to-night, Miss Silence?"

"No;" was the gruff answer.

"Are you in a hurry about those bags?" said he, glancing at a pile of unmade ones which lay by her side.

No reply. "Well!" said our hero to himself, "I'll make her speak."

Miss Silence's needle-book and brown thread lay on a chair beside her. Our friend helped himself to a needle and thread, and taking one of the bags, planted himself bolt upright opposite to Miss Silence, and pinning his work to his knee, commenced stitching at a rate fully equal to her own.

Miss Silence looked up and fidgeted, but went on with her work faster than before; but the faster she worked, the faster and steadier worked our hero, all in "marvellous silence." There began to be an odd twitching about the muscles of Miss Silence's face; our hero took no notice, having pursed his features into an expression of unexampled gravity, which only grew more in-

tense as he perceived, by certain uneasy movements, that the adversary was beginning to waver.

As they were sitting, stitching away, their needles whizzing at each other like a couple of locomotives engaged in conversation, Marion opened the door.

The poor child had been crying for the greater part of her spare time during the day, and was in no very merry humour; but the moment that her astonished eyes comprehended the scene, she burst into a fit of almost inextinguishable merriment, while Silence laid down her needle, and looked half amused and half angry. Our hero, however, continued his business with inflexible perseverance, unpinning his work and moving the seam along, and going on with increased velocity.

Poor Miss Silence was at length vanquished, and joined in the loud laugh which seemed to convulse her sister. Whereupon our hero unpinned his work, and folding it up, looked up at her with all the assurance of impudence triumphant, and remarked to Marion.

"Your sister had such a pile of these pillow-cases to make, that she was quite discouraged, and

engaged me to do half a dozen of them: when I first came in she was so busy she could not even speak to me."

"Well, if you a'n't the beater for impudence!" said Miss Silence.

"The beater for *industry*—so I thought," rejoined our hero.

Marion, who had been in a highly tragical state of mind all day, and who was meditating on nothing less sublime than an eternal separation from her lover, which she had imagined, with all the affecting attendants and consequents, was entirely revolutionized by the unexpected turn thus given to her ideas, while our hero pursued the opportunity he had made for himself, and exerted his powers of entertainment to the utmost, till Miss Silence, declaring that if she had been washing all day she should not have been more tired than she was with laughing, took up her candle, and good-naturedly left our young people to settle matters between themselves. There was a grave pause of some length when she had departed, which was broken by our hero, who, seating himself by Marion, inquired very seriously if his father had made proposals of marriage to Miss Silence that morning.

"No, you provoking creature!" said Marion, at the same time laughing at the absurdity of the idea.

"Well, now, don't draw on your long face again, Marion," said Joseph; "you have been trying to lengthen it down all the evening, if I would have let you. Seriously, now, I know that something painful passed between my father and you this morning, but I shall not inquire what it was. I only tell you, frankly, that he has expressed his disapprobation of our engagement, forbidden me to go on with it, and —"

"And, consequently, I release you from all engagements and obligations to me, even before you ask it," said Marion.

"You are extremely accommodating," replied Joseph; "but I cannot promise to be as obliging in giving up certain promises made to me, unless, indeed, the feelings that dictated them should have changed."

"Oh, no—no, indeed," said Marion, earnestly; "you know it is not that; but if your father objects to me —"

"If my father objects to you, he is welcome not to marry you," said Joseph.

"Now, Joseph, do be serious," said Marion.

"Well, then, seriously, Marion, I know my obligation to my father, and in all that relates to his comfort I will ever be dutiful and submissive, for I have no college-boy pride on the subject of submission; but in a matter so individually my own as the choice of a wife—in a matter that will most likely affect my happiness years and years after he has ceased to be, I hold that I have a right to consult my own inclinations, and, by your leave, my dear little lady, I shall take that liberty."

"But, then, if your father is made angry, you know what sort of a man he is; and how could I stand in the way of all your prospects?"

"Why, my dear Marion, do you think I count myself dependant upon my father, like the heir of an English estate, who has nothing to do but sit still and wait for money to come to him? No! I have energy and education to start with, and if I cannot take care of myself, and you too, then cast me off and welcome;" and, as Joseph spoke, his fine face glowed with conscious power. He paused a moment, and resumed: "Nevertheless, Marion, I respect my father: whatever others may say of

him, I shall never forget that I owe to his hard earnings the education that enables me to do or be anything, and I shall not wantonly or rudely cross him. I do not despair of gaining his consent; my father has a great partiality for pretty girls, and if his love of contradiction is not kept awake by open argument, I will trust to time and you to bring him round; but, whatever comes, rest assured, my dearest one, I have chosen for life, and cannot change."

The conversation, after this, took a turn which may readily be imagined by all who have been in the same situation, and will, therefore, need no farther illustration.

"Well, Mr. Dudley, railly I don't know what to think now: there's my Joe, he's took and been a courting that 'ere Marion," said Uncle Jaw.

This was the introduction to one of Uncle Jaw's periodical visits to Mr. Dudley, who was sitting with his usual air of mild abstraction, looking into the coals of a bright November fire, while his busy helpmate was industriously rattling her knitting-needles by his side.

A close observer might have suspected that this was *no news* to the good man, who had given a

great deal of good advice, in private, to Master Joseph of late; but he only relaxed his features into a quiet smile, and ejaculated, "I want to know!"

"Yes; and railly, that 'ere girl is a rail pretty un. I was a tellin' my folks that our new minister's wife was a fool to her."

"And so your son is going to marry her?" said the good lady; "I knew that long ago."

"Well—no—not so fast; ye see there's two to that bargain yet. You see, Joe, he never said a word to me, but took and courted the girl out of his own head; and when I come to know, says I, 'Joe,' says I, 'that 'ere girl won't do for me;' and I took and tell'd him, then, about that 'ere old fence, and all about that old mill, and them medders of mine; and I tell'd him, too, about that 'ere lot of Marion's; and I should like to know now, how that lot business is a going to turn out."

"Judge Smith and Squire Moseley say that my claim to it will stand," said the deacon.

"They do?" said Uncle Jaw, with much satisfaction; "s'pose then you'll sue, won't you?"

"I don't know," replied he, meditatively.

Uncle Jaw was thoroughly amazed: that any one should have doubts about entering suit for a fine piece of land, when sure of obtaining it, was a problem quite beyond his powers of solving.

"You say your son has courted the girl," said the deacon after a long pause; "that strip of land is the best part of Marion's share; I paid down five hundred dollars for it; I've got papers here that Judge Smith and Squire Moseley say will stand good in any court of law."

Uncle Jaw pricked up his ears and was all attention, eying with eager looks the packet; but, to his disappointment, the deacon deliberately laid it into his desk, shut and locked it, and resumed his seat.

"Now, railly," said Uncle Jaw, "I should like to know the particulars."

"Well, well," said Mr. Dudley, "the lawyers will be at my house to-morrow evening, and if you have any concern about it, you may as well come along."

Uncle Jaw wondered all the way home at what he could have done to get himself into the confidence of the old man, who, he rejoiced to think was a going to "take" and go to law like other folks.

The next day there was an appearance of some bustle and preparation about Mr. Dudley's house; the best room was opened and aired; an ovenful of cake was baked, and our friend Joseph, with a face full of business, was seen passing to and fro, in and out of the house, from various closetings with Mr. Dudley, whose lady bustled about the house with an air of wonderful mystery, and even gave her directions about eggs and raisins in a whisper, lest they should possibly let out some eventful secret.

The afternoon of that day Joseph appeared at the house of the sisters, stating that there was to be company at Mr. Dudley's that evening, and he was sent to invite them.

"Why, what's got into these folks lately," said Silence, "to have company so often? Joe Adams, this 'ere is some 'cut up' of yours. Come, what are you up to now?"

"Come, come, dress yourselves and get ready," said Joseph; and, stepping up to Marion, as she was following Silence out of the room, he whispered something into her ear, at which she stopped short and coloured violently.

"Why, Joseph, what do you mean?"

"It is so," said he.

"No, no, Joseph; no, I can't, indeed I can't."

"But you *can*, Marion."

"Oh, Joseph, don't."

"Oh, Marion, *do*."

"Why, how strange, Joseph!"

"Come, come, my dear, you keep me waiting. If you have any objections on the score of propriety, we will talk about them *to-morrow*;" and our hero looked so saucy and so resolute that there was no disputing farther; so, after a little more lingering and blushing on Marion's part, and a few kisses and persuasions on the part of the suiter, Miss Marion seemed to be brought to a state of resignation.

At a table in the middle of Mr. Dudley's north front room were seated the two lawyers, whose legal opinion was that evening to be fully made up. The younger of these, Squire Moseley, was a rosy, portly, laughing little bachelor, who boasted that he had offered himself, in rotation, to every pretty girl within twenty miles round, and, among others, to Marion Jones, notwithstanding which he still remained a bachelor, with a fair prospect of being an old one; but none of these things disturbed

the boundless flow of good-nature and complacency with which he seemed at all times full to overflowing. On the present occasion he seemed to be particularly in his element, as if he had some law business in hand remarkably suited to his turn of mind; for, on finishing the inspection of the papers, he started up, slapped his graver brother on the back, made two or three flourishes round the room, and then seizing Mr. Dudley's hand, shook it violently, exclaiming,

"All's right, all's right! hurrah!"

When Uncle Jaw entered, Mr. Dudley, without preface, handed him a chair and the papers, saying,

"These papers are what you wanted to see. I just wish you would read them over."

Uncle Jaw read them deliberately over. "Didn't I tell ye so? The case is as clear as a bell: now ye will go to law, won't you?"

"Look here, Mr. Adams; now you have seen these papers, and heard what's to be said, I'll make you an offer. Let your son marry Marion Jones, and I'll burn these papers and say no more about it, and there won't be a girl in the parish with a finer portion."

Uncle Jaw opened his eyes with amazement, and looked at the old man, his mouth gradually expanding wider and wider, as if he hoped, in time, to swallow the idea.

"Well, now," at length he ejaculated.

"I mean just as I say," said the deacon.

"Why, that's the same as giving the girl five hundred dollars out of your own pocket, and she a'n't no relation neither."

"I know it," said the deacon; "but I have said I will do it."

"What upon 'arth for?" said Uncle Jaw.

"To make peace," said the good man, "and to let you know that when I say it is better to give up one's rights than to quarrel, I mean so. I am an old man; my children are dead"—his voice faltered,—"my treasures are laid up in heaven; if I can make the children happy, why, I will. When I thought I had lost the land, I made up my mind to lose it, and so I can now."

Uncle Jaw looked fixedly on the old man and said,

"Well, well, I believe you. I vow, if you ha'n't got something ahead in t'other world, I'd like to know who has, that's all; so, if Joe has no objections, and I rather guess he won't have —"

"The short of the matter is," said the squire, "we'll have a wedding; so come on;" and with that he threw open the parlour door, where stood Marion and Joseph in a recess by the window, while Silence and the Rev. Mr. Bissel were drawn up by the fire, and the lady of the house was, sweeping up the hearth, as she had been doing ever since the party arrived.

Instantly Joseph took the hand of Marion, and led her to the middle of the room; the merry squire seized the hand of Miss Silence and placed her as bridesmaid, and before any one could open their mouths, the ceremony was in actual progress, and the minister, having been previously instructed, made the two one with extraordinary celerity.

"What! what! what!" said Uncle Jaw. "Joseph! Mr. Dudley!"

"Fair bargain, sir," said the squire. "Hand over your papers, Mr. Dudley."

He handed them, and the squire, having read them aloud, proceeded, with much ceremony, to throw them into the fire; after which, in a mock solemn oration, he gave a statement of the whole affair, and concluded with a grave exhortation to the new couple on the duties of wedlock,

which unbent the risibles even of the minister himself.

Uncle Jaw looked at his pretty daughter-in-law, who stood half smiling, half blushing, receiving the congratulations of the party, and then at Miss Silence, who appeared full as much taken by surprise as himself.

"Well, well, Miss Silence, these 'ere young folks have come round us smart enough," said he. "I don't see but we must shake hands upon it." And the warlike powers shook hands accordingly, which was a signal for general merriment.

As the company were dispersing, Miss Silence laid hold of good Mr. Dudley, and by main strength dragged him aside: "Mr. Dudley," said she, "I take back all that e'er I said about you, every word on't."

"Don't say any more about it, Miss Silence," said the good man; "it's gone by, and let it go."

"Joseph!" said his father, the next morning, as he was sitting at breakfast with Joseph and Marion, "I calculate I shall feel proud of this girl yet: and I'll tell you what, I'll give you that nice little place that I took on Stanton's mortgage: it's

a nice little place with green blinds, and flowers, and all them things, just right for Marion."

And, accordingly, many happy years flew over the heads of the young couple in the Stanton place, long after the hoary hairs of their kind benefactor, the deacon, were laid with reverence in the dust. Joseph's father was so far wrought upon by the magnanimity of the good old man as to be very materially changed for the better. Instead of quarrelling in real earnest all around the neighbourhood, he confined himself merely to battling the opposite side of every question with his son, which, as the latter was somewhat of a logician, afforded a pretty good field for the exercise of his powers.

AUGUSTA HOWARD.

In business diligent, in spirit pure
And fervent, 'gainst the ills of life secure,
By the fidelity that wins success,
By unrepining sense of happiness.

ANON.

"AND so you will not sign this paper?" said Alfred Melton to his cousin, a fine-looking young man, who was lounging by the centre table.

"Not I, indeed. What in life have I to do with these decidedly vulgar temperance pledges?"

"Come, come, Cousin Melton," said a brilliant, dark-eyed girl, who had been lolling on the sofa during the conference, "I beg of you to give over attempting to evangelize Edward. You see, as Falstaff has it, 'he is little better than one of the wicked.' You must not waste such valuable temperance documents on him."

"But, seriously, Melton, my good fellow," re-

AUGUSTA HOWARD.

The first sight that met their eyes was Edward Howard, who was tossing aloft a blooming boy, while Augusta was watching his motions, her face radiant with smiles.

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sumed Edward, "this signing, and sealing, and pledging, is altogether an unnecessary affair for me. My past and present habits, my situation in life,—in short, everything that can be mentioned with regard to me, goes against the supposition of my ever becoming the slave of a vice so debasing; and this pledging myself to avoid it is something altogether needless—nay, by implication, it is degrading. As to what you say of my influence, I am inclined to the opinion, that if every man will look to himself, every man will be looked to. This modern notion of tacking the whole responsibility of society on to every individual, is one I am not at all inclined to adopt; for, first, I know it is a troublesome doctrine; and, secondly, I doubt if it be a true one. For both which reasons, I shall decline extending it my patronage."

"Well, positively," exclaimed the lady, "you gentlemen have the gift of continuance in an uncommon degree. You have discussed this matter backward and forward till I am ready to perish. I will take the matter in hand myself, and sign a temperance pledge for Edward, and see that he gets into none of those naughty courses upon which you have been so pathetic."

"I dare say," said Melton, glancing on her brilliant face with evident admiration, "that you will be the best temperance pledge he could have. But every man, cousin, may not be so fortunate."

"But, Melton," said Edward, "seeing my steady habits are so well provided for, you must carry your logic and eloquence to some poor fellow less favoured." And thus the conference ended.

"What a good, disinterested fellow Melton is!" said Edward, after he had left.

"Yes, good as the day is long," said Augusta, "but rather prosy, after all. This tiresome temperance businesss! One never hears the end of it now-a-days. Temperance papers—temperance tracts—temperance hotels—temperance this, that, and the other thing, even down to temperance pocket-handkerchiefs for little boys! Really, the world is getting intemperately temperate."

"Ah, well! with the security you have offered, Augusta, I shall dread no temptation."

Though there was nothing peculiar in these words, yet there was a certain earnestness of tone that called the colour into the face of Augusta, and set her to sewing with uncommon assiduity. And thereupon Edward proceeded with some re-

mark about "guardian angels," together with many other things of the kind, which, though they contain no more that is new than a temperance lecture, always seem to have a peculiar freshness to people in certain circumstances. In fact, before the hour was at an end, Edward and Agusta had forgotten where they began, and had wandered far into that land of anticipations and bright dreams, which surrounds the young and loving before they eat of the tree of experience, and gain the fatal knowledge of good and evil.

But here, stopping our sketching pencil, let us throw in a little back ground and perspective that will enable our readers to perceive more readily the entire picture.

Edward Howard was a young man whose brilliant talents and captivating manners had placed him first in the society in which he moved. Though without property or weight of family connexions, he had become a leader in the circles where these appendages are most considered, and there were none of their immunities and privileges that were not freely at his disposal.

Augusta Elmore was conspicuous in all that lies within the sphere of feminine attainment. She

was an orphan, and accustomed from a very early age to the free enjoyment and control of an independent property. This circumstance, doubtless, added to the magic of her personal graces in procuring for her that flattering deference which beauty and wealth secure.

Her mental powers were naturally superior, although, from want of motive, they had received no development, except such as would secure success in society. Native good sense, with great strength of feeling and independence of mind, had saved her from becoming heartless and frivolous. She was better fitted to lead and to influence than to be influenced or led. And hence, though not swayed by any habitual sense of moral responsibility, the tone of her character seemed altogether more elevated than the average of fashionable society.

General expectation had united the destiny of two persons who seemed every way fitted for each other, and, for once, general expectation did not err. A few months after the interview mentioned were witnessed the festivities and congratulations of their brilliant and happy marriage.

Never did two young persons commence life under happier auspices. "What an exact match!" "What a beautiful couple!" said all the gossips. "They seem made for each other," said every one; and so thought the happy lovers themselves.

Love, which, with persons of strong character, is always an earnest and sobering principle, had made them thoughtful and considerate, and as they looked forward to future life, and talked of the days before them, their plans and ideas were as rational as any plans can be, when formed entirely with reference to this life, without any regard to another.

For a while their absorbing attachment to each other tended to withdraw them from the temptations and allurements of company, and many a long winter evening passed delightfully in the elegant quietude of home, as they read, and sang, and talked of the past, and dreamed of the future in each other's society. But, contradictory as it may appear to the theory of the sentimentalist, it is nevertheless a fact, that two persons cannot always find sufficent excitement in talking to each other merely; and this is specially true of those

to whom high excitement has been a necessary of life. After a while, the young couple, though loving each other none the less, began to respond to the many calls which invited them again into society, and the pride they felt in each other added zest to the pleasures of their return.

As the gaze of admiration followed the graceful motions of the beautiful wife, and the whispered tribute went round the circle whenever she entered, Edward felt a pride beyond all that flattery, addressed to himself, had ever excited; and Augusta, when told of the convivial talents and powers of entertainment which distinguished her husband, could not resist the temptation of urging him into society even oftener than his own wishes would have led him.

Alas! neither of them knew the perils of constant excitement, nor supposed that, in thus alienating themselves from the pure and simple pleasures of home, they were risking their whole capital of happiness. It is in indulging the first desire for extra stimulus that the first and deepest danger to domestic peace lies. Let that stimulus be either bodily or mental, its effects are alike to be *dreaded*.

The man or the woman to whom habitual excitement of any kind has become essential, has taken the first step towards ruin. In the case of a woman, it leads to discontent, fretfulness, and dissatisfaction with the quiet duties of domestic life; in the case of a man, it leads almost invariably to animal stimulus, ruinous alike to the powers of body and mind.

Augusta, fondly trusting to the virtue of her husband, saw no danger in the constant round of engagements which were gradually drawing his attention from the graver cares of business, from the pursuit of self-improvement, and from the love of herself. Already there was in her horizon the cloud "as big as a man's hand"—the precursor of future darkness and tempest; but, too confident and buoyant, she saw it not.

It was not until the cares and duties of a mother began to confine her at home, that she first felt, with a startling sensation of fear, that there was an alteration in her husband, though even then the change was so shadowy and indefinite that it could not be defined by words.

It was known by that quick, prophetic sense, which reveals to the heart of woman the first varia-

tion in the pulse of affection, though it be so slight that no other touch can detect it.

Edward was still fond, affectionate, admiring; and when he tendered her all the little attentions demanded by her situation, or caressed and praised his beautiful son, she felt satisfied and happy. But when she saw that, even without her, the convivial circle had its attractions, and that he could leave her to join it, she sighed, she scarce knew why. "Surely," she said, "I am not so selfish as to wish to rob him of pleasure because I cannot enjoy it with him. But yet, once he told me there was no pleasure where I was not. Alas! is it true, what I have so often heard, that such feelings cannot always last?"

Poor Augusta! she knew not how deep reason she had to fear. She saw not the temptations that surrounded her husband in the circles where, to all the stimulus of wit and intellect was often added the zest of *wine*, used far too freely for safety.

Already had Edward become familiar with a degree of physical excitement which touches the very verge of intoxication; yet, strong in self-confidence, and deluded by the customs of society, he

dreamed not of danger. The traveller who has passed above the rapids of Niagara may have noticed the spot where the first white sparkling ripple announces the downward tendency of the waters. All here is brilliancy and beauty; and as the waters ripple and dance in the sunbeam, they seem only as if inspired by a spirit of new life, and not as hastening to a dreadful fall. So the first approach to intemperance, that ruins both body and soul, seems only like the buoyancy and exulting freshness of a new life, and the unconscious voyager feels his bark undulating with a thrill of delight, ignorant of the inexorable hurry, the tremendous sweep, with which the laughing waters urge him on beyond the reach of hope or recovery.

It was at this period in the life of Edward that one judicious and manly friend, who would have had the courage to point out to him the danger that every one else perceived, might have saved him. But among the circle of his acquaintances there was none such. "*Let every man mind his own business*" was their universal maxim. True, heads were gravely shaken, and Mr. A. regretted to Mr. B. that so promising a young man seemed about to ruin himself. But one was "*no relation*"

of Edward's, and the other "felt a delicacy in speaking on such a subject," and therefore, according to a very ancient precedent, they "passed by on the other side." Yet it was at Mr. A.'s sideboard, always sparkling with the choicest wine, that he had felt the first excitement of extra stimulus; it was at Mr. B.'s house that the convivial club began to hold their meetings, which, after a time, found a more appropriate place in a public hotel. It is thus that the sober, the regular, and the discreet, whose constitution saves them from liabilities to excess, will accompany the ardent and excitable to the very verge of danger, and then wonder at their want of self-control.

It was a cold winter evening, and the wind whistled drearily around the closed shutters of the parlour in which Agusta was sitting. Everything around her bore the marks of elegance and comfort.

Splendid books and engravings lay about in every direction. Vases of rare and costly flowers exhaled perfume, and magnificent mirrors multiplied every object. All spoke of luxury and repose, save the anxious and sad countenance of its mistress.

It was late, and she had watched anxiously for

her husband for many long hours. She drew out her gold and diamond repeater, and looked at it. It was long past midnight. She sighed as she remembered the pleasant evenings they had passed together, as her eye fell on the books they had read together, and on her piano and harp, now silent, and thought of all he had said and looked in those days when each was all to the other.

She was aroused from this melancholy revery by a loud knocking at the street door. She hastened to open it, but started back at the sight it disclosed—her husband borne by four men.

"Dead! is he dead?" she screamed, in agony.

"No, ma'am," said one of the men, "but he might as well be dead as in such a fix as this."

The whole truth, in all its degradation, flashed on the mind of Augusta. Without a question or comment, she motioned to the sofa in the parlour, and her husband was laid there. She locked the street door, and when the last retreating footstep had died away, she turned to the sofa, and stood gazing in fixed and almost stupified silence on the face of her senseless husband.

At once she realized the whole of her fearful lot. She saw before her the blight of her own

affections, the ruin of her helpless children, the disgrace and misery of her husband. She looked around her in helpless despair, for she well knew the power of the vice whose deadly seal was set upon her husband. As one who is struggling and sinking in the waters casts a last dizzy glance at the green sunny banks and distant trees which seem sliding from his view, so did all the scenes of her happy days pass in a moment before her, and she groaned aloud in bitterness of spirit. "Great God! help me—help me!" she prayed. "Save him—oh, save my husband!"

Augusta was a woman of no common energy of spirit, and when the first wild burst of anguish was over, she resolved not to be wanting to her husband and children in a crisis so dreadful.

"When he wakes," she mentally exclaimed, "I will warn and implore; I will pour out my whole soul to save him. My poor husband, you have been misled—betrayed. But you are too good—too generous—too noble to be sacrificed without a struggle."

It was late the next morning before the stupor in which Edward was plunged began to pass off. *He slowly* opened his eyes, started up wildly,

gazed hurriedly around the room, till his eye met the fixed and sorrowful gaze of his wife. The past instantly flashed upon him, and a deep flush passed over his countenance. There was a dead, a solemn silence, until Augusta, yielding to her agony, threw herself into his arms, and wept.

"Then you do not hate me, Augusta?" said he sorrowfully.

"Hate you—never! but oh, Edward—Edward what has beguiled you?"

"My wife—you once promised to be my guardian in virtue—such you are, and will be. Oh, Augusta! you have looked on what you shall never see again—never—never—so help me God!" said he, looking up with solemn earnestness.

And Augusta, as she gazed on the noble face, the ardent expression of sincerity and remorse, could not doubt that her husband was saved. But Edward's plan of reformation had one grand defect. It was merely modification and retrenchment, and not *entire abandonment*. He could not feel it necessary to cut himself off entirely from the scenes and associations where temptation had met him. He considered not that, when the temperate flow of the blood and the even balance of the nerves

have once been destroyed, there is, ever after, a double and fourfold liability, which often makes a man the sport of the first untoward chance.

He still contrived to stimulate sufficiently to prevent the return of a calm and healthy state of the mind and body, and to make constant self-control and watchfulness necessary.

It is a great mistake to call nothing intemperance but that degree of physical excitement which completely overthrows the mental powers. There is a state of nervous excitability, resulting from what is often called moderate stimulation, which often long precedes this, and is, in regard to it, like the premonitory warnings of the fatal cholera, an unsuspected draught on the vital powers, from which, at any moment, they may sink into irremediable collapse.

It is in this state, often, that the spirit of gambling or of wild speculation is induced by the morbid cravings of an over-stimulated system. Unsatisfied with the healthy and regular routine of business, and the laws of gradual and solid prosperity, the excited and unsteady imagination leads its subjects to daring risks, with the alternative of *unbounded gain* on the one side, or of utter ruin

on the other. And when, as is too often the case, that ruin comes, unrestrained and desperate intemperance is the wretched resort to allay the ravings of disappointment and despair.

Such was the case with Edward. He had lost his interest in his regular business, and he embarked the bulk of his property in a brilliant scheme then in vogue; and when he found a crisis coming, threatening ruin and beggary, he had recourse to the fatal stimulus, which, alas! he had never wholly abandoned.

At this time he spent some months in a distant city, separated from his wife and family, while the insidious power of temptation daily increased, as he kept up, by artificial stimulus, the flagging vigour of his mind and nervous system.

It came at last—the blow which shattered alike his brilliant dreams and his real prosperity. The large fortune brought by his wife vanished in a moment, so that scarcely a pittance remained in his hands. From the distant city where he had been to superintend his schemes, he thus wrote to his too confiding wife:

"Augusta, all is over! expect no more from your husband—believe no more of his promises—

for he is lost to you and to him. Augusta, our property is gone; *your* property, which I have blindly risked, is all swallowed up. But is that the worst? No, no, Augusta, I am lost—lost, body and soul, and as irretrievably as the perishing riches I have squandered. Once I had energy—health—nerve—resolution; but all are gone: yes, yes, I have yielded—I do yield daily to what is at once my tormentor and my temporary refuge from intolerable misery. You remember the sad hour you first knew your husband was a drunkard. Your look on that morning of misery—shall I ever forget it! Yet, blind and confiding as you were, how soon did your ill-judged confidence in me return. Vain hopes! I was even then past recovery—even then sealed over to blackness of darkness for ever.

"Alas! my wife, my peerless wife, why am I your husband? why the father of such children as you have given me? Is there nothing in your unequalled loveliness—nothing in the innocence of our helpless babes, that is powerful enough to recall me?—no, there is not.

"Augusta, you know not the dreadful gnawing, he intolerable agony of this master passion. I

walk the floor—I think of my own dear home, my high hopes, my proud expectations, my children, my treasured wife, my own immortal spirit—I feel that I am sacrificing all—feel it till I am withered with agony; but the hour comes—the burning hour, and *all is in vain.* I shall return to you no more, Augusta! All the little wreck I have saved, I send: you have friends, relatives—above all, you have an energy of mind, a capacity of resolute action, beyond that of ordinary women, and you shall never be bound—the living to the dead. True, you will suffer, thus to burst the bonds that unite us; but be resolute, for you will suffer more to watch from day to day the slow workings of death and ruin in your husband. Would you stay with me, to see every vestige of what you once loved passing away; to endure the caprice, the moroseness, the delerious anger of one no longer master of himself? Would you make your children victims and fellow-sufferers with you? No! dark and dreadful is my path! I will walk it alone: no one shall go with me.

"In some peaceful retirement you may concentrate your strong feelings upon your children, and bring them up to fill a place in your heart which

worthless husband has abandoned. If I leave you now, you will remember me as I have been—you will love me and weep for me when dead; but if you stay with me, your love will be worn out; I shall become the object of disgust and loathing. Therefore farewell, my wife—my first, best love farewell! with you I part with hope,

> 'And, with hope, farewell fear,
> Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost:
> Evil, be thou my good.'

This is a wild strain, but fit for me: do not seek for me, do not write: nothing can save me."

Thus abruptly began and ended the letter that conveyed to Augusta the death-doom of her hopes. There are moments of agony when the most worldly heart is pressed upward to God, even as a weight will force upward the reluctant water. Augusta had been a generous, a high minded, an affectionate woman, but she had lived entirely for this world. Her chief good had been her husband and her children. These had been her pride, her reliance, her dependance. Strong in her own resources, she had never felt the need of looking to a higher power for assistance and happiness. But when this letter fell from her trembling hand, her

heart died within her at its wild and reckless bitterness.

In her desperation she looked up to God. "What have I to live for now? was the first feeling of her heart.

But she repressed this iniquity of selfish agony, and besought Almighty assistance to nerve her weakness; and here first began that practical acquaintance with the truths and hopes of religion which changed her whole character.

The possibility of blind, confiding idolatry of any earthly object was swept away by the fall of her husband, and with the full energy of a decided and desolate spirit, she threw herself on the protection of an Almighty helper. She followed her husband to the city whither he had gone, found him, and vainly attempted to save.

There were the usual alternations of short-lived reformations, exciting hopes only to be destroyed. There was the gradual sinking of the body, the decay of moral feeling and principle—the slow but sure approach of disgusting animalism, which marks the progress of the drunkard.

It was some years after that a small and partly ruinous tenement in the outskirts of A—— re-

ceived a new family. The group consisted of four children whose wan and wistful countenances, and still, unchildlike deportment, testified an early acquaintance with want and sorrow. There was the mother, faded and care-worn, whose dark and melancholy eyes, pale cheeks, and compressed lips, told of years of anxiety and endurance. There was the father, with haggard face, unsteady step, and that callous, reckless air, that betrayed long familiarity with degradation and crime. Who that had seen Edward Howard in the morning and freshness of his days, could have recognised him in this miserable husband and father; or who, in this worn and wo-stricken woman, would have known the beautiful, brilliant, and accomplished Augusta? Yet such changes are not fancy, as many a bitter and broken heart can testify.

Augusta had come with her husband to a city where they were wholly unknown, that she might at least escape the degradation of their lot in the presence of those who had known them in better days. The long and dreadful struggle that anihilated the hopes of this life, had raised her feelings *to rest upon the* next, and the habit of communion

with God, induced by sorrows which nothing else could console, had given a tender dignity to her character such as nothing else could bestow.

Poverty, deep poverty, had followed their steps, but yet she had not fainted. Talents, which in her happier days had been nourished merely as luxuries, were now stretched to the utmost to furnish a support; while from the resources of her own reading she drew that which laid the foundation for early mental culture in her children.

Augusta had been here but a few weeks before her footsteps were traced by her only brother, who had lately discovered her situation, and urged her to forsake her unworthy husband and find refuge with him.

"Augusta, my sister, I have found you!" he exclaimed, as he suddenly entered one day, while she was busied with the work of her family.

"Henry, my dear brother!" There was a momentary illumination of countenance accompanying these words, which soon faded into a mournful quietness as she cast her eyes around on the scanty accomodations and mean apartment.

"I see how it is, Augusta; step by step, you are sinking—dragged down by a vain sense of duty to

one no longer worthy. I cannot bear it any longer; I have come to take you away."

Augusta turned from him, and looked abstractedly out of the window. Her features settled in thought. Their expression gradually deepened from their usual tone of mild, resigned sorrow to one of keen anguish.

"Henry," said she, turning towards him, "never was mortal woman so blessed in another as I was once in him. How can I forget it? Who knew him in those days that did not admire and love him? They tempted and ensnared him; and even I urged him into the path of danger. He fell, and there was none to help. I urged reformation, and he again and again promised, resolved, and began. But again they tempted him—even his very best friends; yes, and that, too, when they knew his danger. They led him on as far as it was safe for *them* to go, and when the sweep of his more excitable temperament took him past the point of safety and decency, they stood by and coolly wondered and lamented. How often was he led on by such heartless friends to humiliating falls, and then driven to desperation by the cold look, *averted faces*, and cruel sneers of those whose

medium temperament and cooler blood saved them from the snares which they saw were enslaving him. What if *I* had forsaken him *then*? What account should I have rendered to God? Every time a friend has been alienated by his comrades, it has seemed to seal him with another seal. I am his wife—and mine will be *the last.* Henry, when I leave him, I *know* his eternal ruin is sealed. I cannot do it now; a little longer—a little longer; the hour, I see, must come. I know my duty to my children forbids me to keep them here; take them—they are my last earthly comforts, Henry—but you must take them away. It may be—oh God—perhaps it *must be*, that I shall soon follow, but not till I have tried *once more.* What is this present life to one who has suffered as I have? Nothing. But eternity! Oh, Henry! eternity—how can I abandon him to *everlasting* despair! Under the breaking of my heart I have borne up. I have borne up under *all* that can try a woman; but *this* thought—" She stopped, and seemed struggling with herself; but at last, borne down by a tide of agony, she leaned her head on her hands; the tears streamed through her fingers, and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs.

Her brother wept with her; nor dared he again to touch the point so solemnly guarded. The next day Augusta parted from her children, hoping something from feelings that possibly might be stirred by their absence in the bosom of their father.

It was about a week after this that Augusta one evening presented herself at the door of a rich Mr. L——, whose princely mansion was one of the ornaments of the city of A——. It was not till she reached the sumptuous drawing-room that she recognized in Mr. L—— one whom she and her husband had frequently met in the gay circles of their early life. Altered as she was Mr. L—— did not recognize her, but compassionately handed her a chair, and requested her to wait the return of his lady, who was out; and then turning, he resumed his conversation with another gentleman.

"Now, Dallas," said he, "you are altogether excessive and intemperate in this matter. Society is not to be reformed by every man directing his efforts towards his neighbour, but by every man taking care of himself. It is you and I, my dear sir, who must begin with ourselves, and every other man *must do the* same; and then society will be effec-

tually reformed. Now this modern way, by which every man considers it his duty to attend to the spiritual matters of his next-door neighbour, is taking the business at the wrong end altogether. It makes a vast deal of appearance, but it does very little good."

"But suppose your neighbour feels no disposition to attend to his own improvement—what then?"

"Why, then it is his own concern, and not mine. What my Maker requires is, that I do *my* duty, and not fret about my neighbour's."

"But, my friend, that is the very question. What is the duty your Maker requires? Does it not include some regard to your neighbour, some care and thought for his interest and improvement?'

"Well, well, I do that by setting a good example. I do not mean by example what you do —that is, that I am to stop drinking wine because it may lead him to drink brandy, any more than that I must stop eating because he may eat too much and become a dyspeptic—but that I am to use my wine, and everything else, temperately and decently, and thus set him a good example."

The conversation, was here interrupted by the return of Mrs. L——. It recalled, in all its freshness to the mind of Augusta the days when both she and her husband had thus spoken and thought.

Ah, how did these sentiments appear to her now, lonely, helpless, forlorn—the wife of a ruined husband—the mother of more than orphan children. How different from what they seemed, when, secure in ease, in wealth, in gratified affections, she thoughtlessly echoed the common phraseology, "Why must people concern themselves so much in their neighbours' affairs? Let every man mind his own business."

Augusta received in silence from Mrs. L—— the fine sewing for which she came, and left the room.

"Ellen," said Mr. L—— to his wife, "that poor woman must be in trouble of some kind or other. You must go some time, and see if anything can be done for her."

"How singular!" said Mrs. L——; "she reminds me all the time of Augusta Howard. You remember her, my dear?"

"*Yes, poor* thing! and her husband too. That

was a shocking affair of Edward Howard's. I hear that he became an intemperate, worthless fellow. Who could have thought it!"

"But you recollect, my dear," said Mrs. L——, "I predicted it six months before it was talked of. You remember, at the wine-party which you gave after Mary's wedding, he was so excited that he was hardly decent. I mentioned then that he was getting into dangerous ways. But he was such an excitable creature, that two or three glasses would put him quite beside himself. And there is George Eldon, who takes off his ten or twelve glasses, and no one suspects it."

"Well, it was a great pity," replied Mr. L——; "Howard was worth a dozen George Eldons."

"Do you suppose," said Dallas, who had listened thus far in silence, "that if he had moved in a circle where it was the universal custom to *banish all stimulating drinks*, he would thus have fallen?"

"I cannot say," said Mr. L——; "perhaps not."

Mr. Dallas was a gentleman of fortune and leisure, and of an ardent and enthusiastic temperament. Whatever engaged him absorbed his whole soul; and, of late years, his mind had become

deelpy engaged in schemes of philanthropy for the improvement of his fellow-men. He had, in his benevolent ministrations, often passed the dwelling of Edward, and was deeply interested in the pale and patient wife and mother. He made acquaintance with her through the aid of her children, and, in one way and another, learned particulars of their history that awakened the deepest interest and concern. None but a mind as sanguine as his would have dreamed of attempting to remedy such hopeless misery by the reformation of him who was its cause. But such a plan had actually occurred to him. The remarks of Mr. and Mrs. L—— recalled the idea, and he soon found that his projected protegée was the very Eward Howard whose early history was thus disclosed. He learned all the minutiæ from these his early associates without disclosing his aim, and left them still more resolved upon his benevolent plan.

He watched his opportunity when Edward was free from the influence of stimulus, and it was just after the loss of his children had called forth some remains of his better nature. Gradually and kindly he tried to touch the springs of his mind, and *awaken some* of its buried sensibilities.

"It is in vain, Mr. Dallas, to talk thus to me," said Edward, when one day, with the strong eloquence of excited feeling, he painted the motives for attempting reformation; "you might as well try to reclaim the lost in hell. Do you think," he continued, in a wild, determined manner, "do you think I do not know all you can tell me? I have it all by heart, sir; no one can preach such discourses as I can on this subject: I know all—believe all—as the devils believe and tremble."

"Ay, but," said Dallas, "to you *there is hope;* you *are not* to ruin yourself forever."

"And who are you, to speak to me in this way?" said Edward, looking up from his sullen despair with a gleam of curiosity, if not of hope.

"God's messenger to you, Edward Howard," said Dallas, fixing his keen eye upon him solemnly, "to you, Edward Howard, who have thrown away talents, hope, and health—who have blasted the heart of your wife, and beggared your suffering children. To you I am the messenger of your God—by me he offers health, and hope, and self-respect, and the regard of your fellow-men. You may heal the broken heart of your wife, and give

back a father to your helpless children. Think of it, Howard: what if it were possible? only suppose it. What would it be again to feel yourself a man, beloved and respected as you once were, with a happy home, a cheerful wife, and smiling little ones? Think how you could repay your poor wife for all her tears! What hinders you from gaining all this?"

"Just what hindered the rich man in hell—'*be tween us there is a great gulf fixed;*' it lies between me and all that is good; my wife, my children, my hope of heaven, are all on the other side."

"Ay, but this gulf can be passed: Howard, what *would you give* to be a temperate man?"

"What would I give?" said Howard—he thought for a moment, and burst into tears.

"Ah, I see how it is," said Dallas; "you need a friend, and God has sent you one."

"What *can* you do for me, Mr. Dallas?" said Edward, in a tone of wonder at the confidence of his assurances.

"I will tell you what I can do: I can take you to my house, and give you a room, and watch over you until the strongest temptations are past—I *can give you* business again. I can do *all* for you

that needs to be done, if you will give yourself to my care."

"Oh God of mercy!" exclaimed the unhappy man, "is there hope for me? I cannot believe it possible;" but take me where you choose—I will follow and obey."

A few hours witnessed the transfer of the lost husband to one of the retired apartments in the elegant mansion of Dallas, where he found his anxious and grateful wife still stationed as his watchful guardian.

Medical treatment, healthful exercise, useful employment, simple food, and pure water, were connected with a personal supervision by Dallas, which, while gently and politely sustained, at first amounted to actual imprisonment.

For a time the reaction from the sudden suspension of habitual stimulus was dreadful, and even with tears did the unhappy man entreat to be permitted to abandon the undertaking. But the resolute steadiness of Dallas and the tender entreaties of his wife prevailed. It is true that he might be said to be saved "so as by fire;" for a fever, and a long and fierce delerium, wasted him almost to the borders of the grave.

But, at length, the struggle between life and death was over, and though it left him stretched on the bed of sickness, emaciated and weak, yet he was restored to his right mind, and was conscious of returning health. Let any one who has laid a friend in the grave, and known what it is to have the heart fail with longing for them day by day, imagine the dreamy and unreal joy of Augusta when she began again to see in Edward the husband so long lost to her. It was as if the grave had given back the dead!

"Augusta!" said he, faintly, as, after a long and quiet sleep, he awoke free from delirium. She bent over him. "Augusta, I am redeemed —I am saved—I feel in myself that I am made whole."

The high heart of Augusta melted at these words. She trembled and wept. Her husband wept also, and after a pause he continued:

"It is more than being restored to this life—I feel that it is the beginning of eternal life. It is the Saviour who sought me out, and I know that he is able to keep me from falling."

But we will draw a veil over a scene which words *have little* power to paint.

"Pray, Dallas," said Mr. L——, one day, "who is that fine-looking young man whom I met in your office this morning? I thought his face seemed familiar."

"It is a Mr. Howard—a young lawyer whom I have lately taken into business with me."

"Strange! Impossible!" said Mr. L——. "Surely this cannot be the Howard that I once knew?"

"I believe he is," said Mr. Dallas.

"Why, I thought he was gone—dead and done over, long ago, with intemperance."

"He was so; few have ever sunk lower; but he now promises even to outdo all that was hoped of him."

"Strange! Why, Dallas, what did bring about this change?"

"I feel a delicacy in mentioning how it came about, to you, Mr. L——, as there undoubtedly was a great deal of 'interference with other men's matters' in the business. In short, the young man fell in the way of one of those meddlesome fellows, who go prowling about, distributing tracts, forming temperance societies, and all that sort of stuff."

"Come, come, Dallas," said Mr. L——, smiling, "I must hear the story, for all that."

"First call with me at this house," said Dallas, stopping before the door of a neat little mansion. They were soon in the parlour. The first sight that met their eyes was Edward Howard, who, with a cheek glowing with exercise, was tossing aloft a blooming boy, while Augusta was watching his motions, her face radiant with smiles.

"Mr. and Mrs. Howard, this is Mr. L——, an old acquaintance, I believe."

There was a moment of mutual embarrassment and surprise, soon dispelled, however, by the frank cordiality of Edward. Mr. L—— sat down, but could scarce withdraw his eyes from the countenance of Augusta, in whose eloquent face he recognised a beauty of a higher caste than even in her earlier days.

He glanced about the apartment. It was simply, but tastefully furnished, and wore an air of retired, domestic comfort. There were books, engravings, and musical instruments. Above all, there were four happy, healthy-looking children, pursuing studies or sports at the farther end of the room.

After a short call they regained the street.

"Dallas, you are a happy man," said Mr. L——; "*that family* will be a mine of jewels to you."